

THE LATEST INNOVATION.

THE constitutional point that was raised on the Heligoland Bill is probably not one of very great importance for practical purposes. The Government have done their best to create a bad precedent, by superseding the prerogative right of the Crown to make cession of territory, and substituting for it a proceeding by Bill, to which the assent of the Lords is necessary. But the precedent cannot be binding, and therefore the consequences which would follow if it were binding need not alarm us. Of course, when a Liberal Minister wishes at any future time to make a cession of territory that chances to be disagreeable to the Lords, he will resort to prerogative and not to Bill, and in view of Mr. Gladstone's protest against the opposite course in the present instance, nobody will be able to gainsay or to complain.

So much for the practical bearings of the controversy. What strikes us as most remarkable about the discussion is the curious misapprehension of the Ministerial innovation both by some Radicals on the one hand and by Ministers themselves on the other. Let us take the Radicals first. They were amazed that a Liberal leader should be found defending prerogative against Parliament. They insisted that the submission of a treaty to Parliament is, in the words of Sir Henry James, an acknowledgment of the advance of the power of democracy. It is hard to imagine a more striking example of the misleading power of a phrase and the old associations of a phrase. Because prerogative once meant the direct personal influence of the Sovereign, and as such became odious to Parliament men—popular reformers, and Liberals—prerogative still remains obnoxious in the minds of the Radicals of shibboleth. Nothing could be more absurd, or more belated and out of date. The true position has been accurately described in an excellent passage in Mr. Dicey's book on the "Law of the Constitution." Were the House of Lords, he says, to have conferred upon it such powers in respect of making treaties as are possessed by the American Senate—and that is precisely what would be done if the Heligoland precedent were accepted as binding—though the change would be described with technical correctness as the limitation of the prerogative of the Crown, its real effect would be to place a legal check on the discretionary powers of the Cabinet. "The survival of the prerogative, conferring as it does wide discretionary authority on the Cabinet, immensely increases the authority of the House of Commons, and ultimately of the constituencies by which that House is returned. When the Cabinet cannot act, except by means of legislation, other considerations come into play. A law requires the sanction of the House of Lords. Hence, while every action of the Cabinet which is done in virtue of the prerogative is, in fact, though not in name, under the direct control of the representative Chamber, all powers which can be exercised only in virtue of a statute are more or less controlled by the will of the House of Lords." The upshot is that "the prerogatives of the Crown have become the privileges of the people." We know that some ardent Radicals in Parliament scoff at the bare mention of the House of Lords, just as ardent crowds will cheer until they are hoarse any reference to ending it. This is all very well, but until public opinion is ready to end it against its own will (that is, by force), the House of Lords remains to be reckoned with and dealt with, and will continue to possess a very considerable power of making itself an impediment and a nuisance to Liberal Governments.

If, however, Radicals misunderstood the innovation from their point of view, so do the Tory statesmen misunderstand it from theirs. What is the main complaint of Lord Salisbury against the present working of our parliamentary constitution? The weakness of the Executive, the growing tendency of the House of Commons to meddle. One would suppose, therefore, that if he found any province of executive action from which constitutional usage excluded direct meddling by the House of Commons, Lord Salisbury would be its most jealous guardian. Strange to say, Mr. Balfour lays down exactly the opposite view. It seemed to him, he said, "that in these days, when the whole tendency of the stream of events is to increase the power of Parliament over the Executive, it is good to give Parliament not merely the power of punishing, but of preventing the Ministry from falling into error." Accepting the premiss, we should have confidently expected Conservatives, as the champions of executive power, to draw from it the inference that nothing should be done to accelerate or to swell the "stream of events" to which Mr. Balfour referred. The power of Parliament over the Executive is, of course, the very foundation of our Constitution. But one of the great dangers of our time is the usurpation of executive power by Parliament; and to say that it is good that Parliament should in executive acts prevent Ministers from falling into error is to countenance this usurpation. The old and famous view of the supreme importance of separating legislative from executive functions has lost some of its virtue, but it is a bad error to think that there is nothing in it. Mr. Balfour's doctrine is an invitation to Parliament to do the work of the Cabinet. Its application in the Heligoland case sets a precedent which undoubtedly weakens the full responsibility of the Executive Government exactly in those matters of great pith and moment—nothing can be graver than the act of ceding territory or of entering into treaty obligations—where a free hand and full responsibility are most indispensable. Less harm, in the long run, is to be apprehended from any error into which a Foreign Secretary is ever likely to fall, than is to be feared from the enervating consciousness in his mind, that if he falls into error the House of Commons is in the background ready to extricate him. When a Minister goes into a negotiation with a foreign Power, he should feel that the whole and undivided burden of bringing the negotiation to a good end and forming right decisions rests on his own shoulders, and that if his decision be a wrong one, he must pay the penalty in the disapproval of the House with all its consequences. The more important the act, the more essential it is that it should be done by a man with plenary authority and sole responsibility. It is true that a Cabinet may make an impolitic cession, but we do not know that its impolicy is any less likely to be present to a Cabinet than to the majority who placed it in power.

A Cabinet may take a false step, but so may a parliamentary majority take one too; and we do not know that a single treaty obligation has been entered into in this century which the House of Commons of the day would have rejected even if it had had the chance.

One other consideration was left out in the debate, and that was the effect of the innovation upon the despatch of public business. What is the use of talk about the necessity of relieving Parliament of the unmanageable weight of its work, and then proceeding to add to that work the revision of treaties, in order to "prevent the Ministry from falling into error?"

SOUTH AMERICAN UNREST.

AFTER a comparatively long period of repose Central and South America seem once more to have been seized by a revolutionary paroxysm. Last November the stablest of all South American governments was overthrown without so much as a shot being fired in its defence. This week there has been a sanguinary revolutionary struggle in Buenos Ayres. There are formidable riots reported from Chili; in one case gunboats firing upon the mob in an open town; and Guatemala and San Salvador are at war. The causes of disturbance are different in the several cases. The revolution in Brazil was brought about largely by the anger of the slaveowners, and partly by the unpopularity of the Emperor's son-in-law. In Buenos Ayres the revolt of the troops was mainly instigated by the causes set out in these columns a fortnight ago, though no doubt the ill-feeling existing between Buenos Ayres and the interior had something to do with it. The chief incitement, however, was financial distress—reckless extravagance on the part of the national, provincial, and municipal governments, the owners of houses and lands, and the promoters of industrial enterprise of every kind, leading to the piling up of debt upon debt, and to an insane speculation which after a while ended in widespread ruin. The disastrous consequences were aggravated by the issuing of inconvertible paper money in amounts altogether beyond the requirements of the country, and still more by the form in which the extravagance of the owners of houses and lands was ministered to by the mortgage banks of the Republic and of the province of Buenos Ayres—the issue, that is, of cedulas or mortgage bonds. The first consequence of all this was a ruinous depreciation of the paper money, which meant of course an exorbitant rise in all prices. Naturally shopkeepers, to protect themselves from a depreciation which, with constant and violent fluctuations, seemed yet to be ever growing more and more pronounced, put up prices more than the value of the paper dollar fell, and although wages rose also they did not rise at all so quickly as prices. The whole of the working classes suffered grievously from this state of things, but none suffered so much as those who were in receipt of fixed incomes, like, for example, the soldiers and sailors. While the fatal financial policy pursued by President Celman has thus brought loss and suffering upon all classes of the community, he is believed almost universally to have adopted that policy mainly for the purpose of enriching himself and his friends. It matters little whether the charges made against him are true or false; they are widely believed at home and abroad, and the belief made inevitable a movement to depose him from authority. A few months ago an armed demonstration compelled him to change his Cabinet, and to promise the necessary reforms. For a while it was hoped that he had seen his mistakes, and would be careful to avoid them in future. But when it was perceived that he soon recovered courage to recur to his old course, the general expectation was that there would be another demonstration, but that it would this time make sure of its object. There are reasons for believing, indeed, that preparations were being made with that view, but the popular movement has been anticipated by a mutiny of a large part of the troops in garrison at Buenos Ayres.

Some surprise has been expressed at the large measure of support the President has found. It was thought that he had become so utterly discredited that the first shot fired against his authority would cause all his followers to fall away from him. As a

matter of fact, the police and a portion of the army have firmly stood by him and fought most gallantly in his defence. The explanation of course is—four years of the President's term of office have expired; in two years' time, therefore, it will be possible constitutionally to replace him by another chief of the executive more in accordance with the wishes of the people. The Argentine Republic has now enjoyed a long period of political repose. Its population has grown very rapidly, from the large European immigration. The area under cultivation has been immensely extended, the wealth has greatly increased, and the better part of the people have learned to value orderly and constitutional government. Probably many of those who have stood by President Celman had little sympathy with his special policy. Señor Pellegrini, the vice-president, who in the constitutional course of things would succeed him if he were for any reason removed from office during the six years for which he has been elected, is believed both at home and in Europe to be a man of honourable character and considerable ability. The vice-president is not responsible for the conduct of the administration; but he has stood by his chief unflinchingly, and, indeed, when the chief himself abandoned Buenos Ayres Señor Pellegrini remained in the Government House. So, again, General Roca, the President's brother-in-law, and his immediate predecessor in office, appears to have been largely instrumental in keeping a part of the army loyal to the Government. The ex-President is popular in the army, and it seems reasonable to conclude, therefore, that it is he, mainly, who has been able to rally so considerable a force to the side of the constituted authorities. But whatever may be the causes which have enabled the administration to defend itself so much more strenuously than European observers were prepared to expect, it is satisfactory to all friends of popular government to find that, even under such an administration as that of Dr. Celman, there are men of influence, ability, and character, who are not willing to see military violence override the Republican constitution. It would seem that from want of ammunition the revolt has failed; but the temper of Buenos Ayres is still dangerous, and it is to be feared that the end has not yet been reached. In any event the Celman administration would seem to be dead. Whether the President has or has not actually resigned he cannot hope to retain office. He has brought the country to the brink of ruin, and can hardly be allowed to damage it further. If he resigns, and if he is succeeded by an honest and capable man, we may hope that the necessary remedial measures will be adopted, and that the danger of a prolonged conflict between Buenos Ayres and the rest of the confederation will be averted. Even so, however, there must be a long period of depression and distress, attended by numerous bank failures and by wide-spread agricultural and commercial embarrassment, and possibly also by default on the part of some of the provincial and municipal governments.

The struggle between Guatemala and San Salvador appears to have been provoked by the desire to bring about a reunion of the Central American States. Last year an attempt to reunite was made, and was thought for a little while to have some prospect of success. But it failed, and the failure was largely due to the action of San Salvador. Guatemala, as the leading State, is very anxious for union, and appears to have endeavoured by force to compel San Salvador to agree. As it has an area nearly six times as large, and a population more than twice as numerous, it is not surprising that the

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President of Guatemala felt sure of success. But, apparently, he has been repulsed with loss; and although it will be well to receive with some caution the telegrams that are being transmitted to Europe, there appears to be little doubt that the smaller State has been decidedly successful. Whatever may be the motives of the aggressor, and however we may admire the courage and skill of the Salvadorians, no reasonable person can doubt that it would be greatly to the advantage of the Central American States if they would form a union amongst themselves, and abide by it. For example, the whole area of San Salvador does not very greatly exceed that of Yorkshire alone, and the population is less than 700,000 souls. Guatemala is a more respectable State, but even it is not as large as England and Wales, and its whole population is only about one and a quarter millions. Clearly it would be for the benefit of both these States and of the neighbouring republics, to combine with one another for the purpose of employing the common resources for the common benefit and the common promotion of civilisation, which is everywhere very backward. No doubt there are great difficulties in the way, not merely the local jealousies of the several States, but the unwillingness of Mexico to see a powerful republic founded on her southern border. It is hardly likely, however, that Mexico would venture to interfere if the States themselves were willing to unite. Yet we are bound to add that war is not the way best calculated to win San Salvador to the side of union, and that therefore the Guatemalan President has been ill advised, if not something worse, in his enterprise.

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.

WE cannot pretend to congratulate the Duke of Cambridge upon either the tone or the substance of his remarks in reply to Lord Sandhurst in the House of Lords yesterday week. Stated briefly, the position which the Duke took in answer to a very moderate and sensible appeal from Lord Sandhurst on the question of the recent insubordination among the Guards, was one of overbearing defiance. "If you have confidence in me you must leave me alone; if you have no confidence why do you not say so?" This was practically the position taken up by the Duke. If our readers please they may regard it as a bold and manly position, but it was certainly not the position which even so exalted a personage as the Commander-in-Chief had any right to assume towards either House of Parliament. In order to satisfy ourselves of this fact we have only to assume, for the purpose of the argument, that the office of Commander-in-Chief was held, not by the Duke of Cambridge, but by Lord Wolseley. What would have been thought of Lord Wolseley if he had treated the House of Lords as the Duke treated it? Why, the very newspapers which in their sycophantic zeal applauded the Duke for snubbing a member of the Legislature who was bent on discharging a public duty, would have been loudest in denouncing Lord Wolseley for that which in his case they would very rightly have regarded as a most improper attempt to over-ride the supreme authority of Parliament.

The temptation is very strong after hearing such a speech as that which fell from the Duke's lips to accept his challenge, and say bluntly, "Well, we have no confidence in you, and we cannot but think that the time is come when you would do well to recognise that fact by resigning." This, however, would be as unfair to the Duke as he himself was to Lord Sandhurst. There is a very general recognition

among all classes of the Duke's devotion to his duties; of his honesty, his straightforwardness, his sincere desire to do his best both for the Army and for the country; and, remembering these things, there is no wish to attach undue importance to the fact that His Royal Highness is not a man of genius, and has never even shown that he belongs to the higher order of scientific soldiers. But whilst we respect the Duke of Cambridge, and have no desire to wound his somewhat susceptible disposition, we cannot for a moment admit that in his present position he is otherwise than subordinate to the authority of Parliament. We know that a prolonged struggle took place before the full authority of Parliament over the Army was at last recognised at the Horse Guards and the supremacy of the Secretary for War over the Commander-in-Chief formally admitted. But of what use is that formal admission if, whenever a member of Parliament ventures to touch upon a question affecting the discipline of the Army, he is to be met as Lord Sandhurst was met a week ago, with a blunt intimation from the Commander-in-Chief that the question is not one with which Parliament has any right to deal? If the discipline of the Army is not to be inquired into by Lords or Commons, what subject connected with military administration is to be open to Parliamentary investigation, and what possible control can the Legislature exercise over those who are supposed to be subordinate to it? These are questions which we respectfully commend to the consideration of the Peers who cheered the Duke of Cambridge when he put a veto upon a debate in their House, and to the correspondents who have since written silly letters to the *Times* and other newspapers applauding the Duke and abusing Lord Sandhurst.

Against any needless interference with the discipline of the Army we are perfectly willing to support the Duke in protesting, however strong his protests may be. But has there been any needless interference in this case? Is it not clear to everybody that there has been a most serious breakdown in the discipline which the Duke is so anxious to maintain, and that this breakdown has occurred under circumstances which suggest that there must be something radically wrong in the system of Army administration now in force? The Commander-in-Chief has no right in these circumstances, when the department of which he is the head has thus come to grief, to evade any Parliamentary inquiry by the plea that nobody ought to interfere with the discipline of the Army. If that discipline had been maintained, if there had been no insubordination among the Guards, no hasty infliction of punishment all round, no public and flagrant scandal, we could have sympathised with him in his angry protest against the action of Lord Sandhurst. But, seeing all that has happened, remembering that every newspaper in the country has had its say about the affair at the Wellington Barracks, we must express our unfeigned astonishment that the Duke should have sought to suppress any discussion in Parliament of a grave incident reflecting seriously upon the Army as a whole. Nor can we for a moment admit that those who insist upon the investigation of this question are doing anything to weaken the discipline of the Army. We feel as strongly as the Commander-in-Chief does the necessity for maintaining that discipline, and it is precisely because we are anxious that there should be no risk of a repetition of the recent disorders, or of the creation of a false sympathy with an insubordinate regiment, that we ask that the whole of the circumstances connected with the recent incident should be thoroughly investigated.

The remarks we made last week on the subject

have stirred the *St. James's Gazette* to some lively criticisms intended to demonstrate the absurdity of our suggestion that the system of organisation in the Army must be at fault. According to our contemporary we hold that the Commander-in-Chief and other high dignitaries "ought to pay surprise visits (after the fashion of the Music Hall Inspectors of the London County Council) to barracks, to see Tommy Atkins at home, and find out whether he has any grievances;" and it delights itself exceedingly with an idea so grotesque. We never of course suggested anything of the kind; but supposing we had done so, would the idea have been half so grotesque as the reality—the painful reality—which we have now to face? That is, that the Commander-in-Chief and his principal officers know so little of the real condition of the Army they are paid to administer, that for weeks at a stretch a crack regiment may be seething with the spirit of disaffection in the Wellington Barracks without a soul in authority in Pall Mall knowing anything about it. Nay, the case is even worse than this. Though it was the common talk at the military clubs that "something was about to happen" in the Second Battalion of the Grenadiers, nobody in the War Office heard that talk; and when at last the explosion took place, and every street boy in London had heard of the "mutiny of the Guards," the one man who was in blissful ignorance of the occurrence was the head of the Army himself, the Secretary of State for War! Does our lively contemporary think this is a creditable state of things, or one which justifies the Duke of Cambridge in suppressing debate on the subject in Parliament by a hectoring speech like that of yesterday week? For our part we say frankly that if the Commander-in-Chief, the Adjutant-General, and—let us add—the Secretary for War, cannot learn the real state of the Army in any other way than that suggested by the *St. James's Gazette*, the sooner they adopt that method, humiliating as it is, and turn themselves into private Inspectors of the Forces, the better. But what a satire upon the whole state of our Army organisation is the fact that anybody should have to contemplate such a remedy as this!

THE PROSPECTS OF VICTORY IN WALES.

MR. GLADSTONE lately remarked that Wales has during the last three years made greater headway in securing the political recognition of her nationality than she had during the previous three centuries. Liberals and Tories alike now more willingly concede and act upon the principle embodied in the Redistribution Act of 1884 that Wales is not a group of highland counties and scattered boroughs but a nationality. It is reserved for Liberal Unionists—more Tory than the Tories themselves—to treat Wales as politically non-existent. As a Church Defence advocate, Lord Selborne triumphantly crowns his argument against the Disestablishment of the English Church in Wales by the assertion that Wales is only an English county. Mr. Goschen heroically defends the citadel of Government statistics against the inroad of the heresy of Welsh nationality. Having during a stormy all-night sitting in May promised to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the financial relations between the countries of the United Kingdom, he pedantically refuses to include Wales in the reference to the Committee. But the polling-booth overpowers pedantry. Every election in Wales brings proof to Mr. Goschen and the anti-nationalists that new popular forces must be reckoned with. Even after Wales had broken the back of the old Toryism which had for long generations

held Welsh life in its grip, Welsh constituencies were made the refuge for defeated English Liberals. Lord Hartington was for many years a Welsh member, but it would be a wild flight of fancy to imagine that he ever gave a thought to the national needs of Wales. Estimable Liberals who were reformers too advanced for Liverpool were accepted years ago with respect, if not with enthusiasm, by Welsh electors as their Parliamentary representatives. But since 1886 every Welsh election results in the return of young Welshmen pledged to work steadfastly for the fullest Parliamentary recognition of Welsh nationality.

The seeds for democratising Welsh feeling and opinion were sown by Nonconformity, whose uprising has formed the salient and decisive feature of the last century and a half of Welsh history, and the harvest has been reaped after the extension of the franchise in 1867 and 1884. In England since 1868 political opinion has oscillated at each succeeding general election between the two great political parties. But in Wales victory has invariably followed the Liberal flag. In 1880 Wales returned twenty-nine out of thirty-three members, and twenty-eight out of thirty-four in 1885. But it was in emerging triumphant from the fiery furnace of the 1886 election that Wales gave the strongest proof of the robustness of her Liberalism. Despite the Protestantism of Wales and the frantic appeals of Mr. Chamberlain, designed to rouse the spirit of religious bigotry, Wales returned twenty-seven Home Rulers, a larger percentage for Irish Home Rule than that returned even by Ireland. Of the remaining seven, one was pledged to Disestablishment. There lies the secret of this staying power and steadfastness of Celtic Wales—two qualities which critics assert to be lacking in the Celt. At all Welsh elections the impulse and momentum come from Disestablishment. It overshadows all other questions, because the demand for it is an outcome of national self-respect. For in its past and present the English Church in Wales is a huge accumulating wrong.

It was largely through the Church that Wales was conquered. Under the rule of the lords of the Marches, the Church was a subjugating weapon. At the Reformation which brought light and freedom to England, the tithe system was utilised for the further plunder of Wales. The Hanoverians deliberately employed the Church to denationalise Wales. The aristocracy and gentry of Wales linked their fortunes with the existence of this Church, with the result that, politically, they have been smitten hip and thigh. Not only have they lost the Parliamentary representation, but, thanks to Mr. Ritchie's Local Government Act, they lost, at one stroke, the control of Welsh county government. It is true that the big, glaring, revolting abuses in the Church in Wales have been, to a large extent, removed. But its baneful influence as an Establishment is omnipresent. It poisons the relations between landlord and tenant, and between employer and employed. Farms and foremanships are often pointed to as perquisites of apostacy. A few years ago, in one of the largest quarries in Wales, two letters, denoting "Churchman and Tory," were placed against the names of certain quarrymen in the quarry pay-books, and the fortunate possessors of those letters received an additional pound in hard cash as a monthly bonus. Proselytism has other striking object-lessons. Two schoolmasters, sons of Methodist deacons, have lately been promoted, one to the Deanery of one diocese, and the other to the Bishopric of another diocese. In English rural parishes it is galling enough for Nonconformists to have to send their children to Church schools. But they are in a minority. But in many Welsh parishes where the Church is in a hopeless minority,

Nonconformists have no voice whatsoever in the control of the village school, and no Nonconformist's child can become a pupil-teacher except by renouncing his father's faith. Clerical ingenuity, developed by ample leisure, is constantly exercised to frustrate the Burials Act. Advantage is taken of every technicality. The choice is sometimes offered to a Nonconformist mourner either of having his dead buried according to the rites of the Church of England, or a grave in that dread corner of the churchyard where suicides and pariahs are put out of the way. Leaning and dependent on a power outside Wales, the dignitaries of the Church become, almost in spite of themselves, anti-national. For the most superior and withering sneer at the Welsh language, watch the face of a Welsh bishop. The emphasis with which the Bishop of St. David's (who was once plain Mr. Jones) tells the clergymen of his diocese that Wales is "a mere geographical expression," would do credit to Metternich. A nation does not avenge its wrongs singly or as they are wrought, but cumulatively and in its own good time. Under Parliamentary government, the ballot box is found a convenient way of wiping out old scores.

But English statesmen must see that it is not well that the grievance of Wales should fester. The continued existence of the Establishment in Wales is a reproach to the Liberal party. The National Liberal Federation has re-affirmed and strengthened its declaration at Manchester that the grievance of Wales should be redressed as soon as Irish Home Rule is accomplished. Wales eagerly, and not without reason, looks to the leaders of the Liberal party. Mr. Gladstone has won the heart of the Irish race all the world over, not alone or mainly by introducing a Home Rule Bill, but by giving the noblest expression to the long agony of Ireland, to her wrongs and her hopes. Declarations from Liberal leaders which will show that they realise the soreness of the Welsh grievance, its blighting influence on national life, its discordant jarring on national unity, will be words of healing to Welshmen and to the Nonconformists of England who support them, and will win many a seat at the coming general election.

There are over twenty impregnable seats in Wales, including Cardiganshire, where, in 1886, a Home Rule Disestablisher beat a Unionist Disestablisher by nine votes. There are six seats to be captured, of which only South Monmouth is unprovided with a candidate. But even there the prospects are more than fair. There will be a struggle to maintain the Liberal supremacy in four groups of boroughs and two counties. The present Government, under the pressure of Disestablishment and with a view to these seats, is doing its utmost, by various concessions, to conciliate and attract Welsh opinion. But a clear outspoken declaration from the Liberal leaders, and especially from Mr. Gladstone, that the task of Welsh Disestablishment not only can but must be accomplished as soon as Irish Home Rule is granted, will not only enable Wales to keep the doubtful seats, but to present the unique spectacle of an unbroken phalanx of Liberal representatives.

THE RUSSIAN HORROR.

WHEREVER in the hearts of men the faintest spark still lingers of the divine sense of justice, wherever ruth and pity still abide, and with them the hatred of cruelty and wrong, the plain unvarnished tale told in the *Times* of last Wednesday must have caused a thrill of shame and horror. It seems impossible—too monstrous to be believed—

and yet it is, alas! too true that the rulers of Russia have given forth a decree which, if carried out in its full enormity, means nothing less than the merciless destruction of a million unoffending human beings. The Jews of the great Empire have lived, have even in some cases thriven, in spite of the cruelties unending and unrelenting of which, from time immemorial, they have been the victims. Their persecutors, with all their zeal and energy, have never quite crushed their native virtues; have never altogether succeeded in reducing them to the level of mere brutes. The marvellous Jewish character, with its unsurpassed strength of brain and will, its unequalled suppleness and power of adaptation, has been too strong even for the cruel tyrants in high places, and the more brutal, but not more base, persecutors of the town and the village; and the Jews in Russia have lived on under it all. Degraded, pillaged, tortured, oppressed in every conceivable and inconceivable way, they have still lived on; but they are to live no longer if the rulers of "Holy Russia" can have their way.

This is the plain meaning and intention of the edicts, the publication of which has filled the Western world with horror and amazement. If these edicts are carried out, scores of thousands of Jews in Russia must perish miserably and quickly, whilst millions more will be left to a yet more hapless fate—to lead a life of misery to which death itself is to be preferred. Of the colossal wickedness of the deed there is no need to speak. Englishmen of every class and party can still happily judge aright in questions of right or wrong in the government of Russia. Even Mr. Swinburne can chant the praises of the tyrannicide who makes a Czar his mark. We are all of one mind as to the hideous criminality of a policy which would have disgraced the most barbarous of European countries in the darkest age of history. It is not so much the wickedness as the insensate folly of the act that needs to be pointed out. Who are the men who are trying to reduce the Government of a great European State to a condition of savagery? They are the rulers of a land which is already honeycombed by sedition; where the sovereign sits trembling in his palace, fearing every footfall as that of a possible assassin; where the Ministers dwell in an atmosphere of corruption, each living for himself, each jealous of his colleague; where the vast prison-provinces of Siberia are crowded with men and women suspected of being disloyal to the Government, and subjected in consequence to tortures the mere recital of which is hardly possible; where every church and school and University—aye, and every private house too—is infested by the spies who create the treason against which they are supposed to guard. It is the rulers of such a State as this who impiously seek to destroy a race that has held its own during long centuries of persecution in which it has had to face foes a thousand times more powerful than Alexander III. and his corrupt and incompetent tools. And who are the men and women against whom this decree has gone forth? They are the people who have taught us that in their case at least the stern dogma of an eye for an eye and a life for a life still holds good; who have been often wronged but never unavenged; on whose behalf Fate itself seems to have wrought, bringing ruin and shame upon their oppressors in exact proportion to the oppression of which they have been guilty. Aye, and they are the people who in our own country have taught us that there is still another sense in which the old dogma of retribution holds good; who have proved to us that in justice and mercy lies the wisdom of statesmen and the strength of rulers, who have required kindness with kindness, and who are to-day one with ourselves in all the instincts of

loyalty and good citizenship. These are the people whose bitterest enmity and hatred the tyrants of Russia in their madness have chosen to invoke.

It is the unparalleled folly almost more than the wickedness of this deed which must strike the mind. But the folly is no palliation of the wickedness, and against that we hold that all nations, but England above all others, must raise the voice of protest. We say England, above all others, because it is to England that the thoughts of these victims of cruel wrong will first turn. Here is the asylum on which for years past they have cast their longing eyes—the land where, in the eye of the law, the life of the Jew is accounted of equal value with that of the Christian. They have come to us already in thousands, and we know with what consequences to our own working-men. Surely we cannot allow another Power to force upon us by a policy of deliberate cruelty a vast invasion of wretched men and women, who must flood our already overcrowded labour-market and add enormously to the gravity of that social problem which even now seems to defy solution! In our own selfish interests, therefore, if no other motive prompted us, we are bound to raise our protest against this deed of sin and shame. But, all selfish thoughts apart, it is impossible to believe that public opinion in England will remain indifferent, whilst an iniquity like this is carried out in all its enormity by a Government which calls itself Christian and civilised, and which has at its head a Sovereign who is closely allied to our own Royal Family, and whose personal character must have been strangely misrepresented and misunderstood, if he can for a moment tolerate the crime which is about to be committed in his name.

LAST WORDS ON THE AFRICAN AGREEMENT.

THE Tory party is a wonderful body of men. Its obedience, its cohesion, its willingness to accept everything, however opposed to all its previous wishes and declarations, which its leaders tender to it, are superb. There is little need to discuss who shall succeed Lord Salisbury or Mr. Smith, for, apparently, anyone can lead so well-disciplined a host, which nothing but the vision of enraged constituents stirs (as in the case of the recent Purchase of Licences Bill) to murmurs of disaffection. If the Anglo-German Agreement, which has now passed through both Houses of Parliament unmodified, had been concluded by a Liberal Government, it would have been censured by the House of Lords, Lord Salisbury leading the way, and denounced with genuine and not merely simulated indignation on every Conservative platform in the country. Had some enterprising newspaper-man surreptitiously obtained its provisions and announced two months ago that they were to be proposed by the heirs of Lord Beaconsfield, no Conservative would have believed the story. "It is impossible," we should have been told, "that any one but a spiritless Radical should contemplate the extension of German power over that vast territory which Germany has done nothing to explore or civilise between Tanganyika and the coast; the concession to Germany of an area at the north end of Tanganyika, cutting off the British stations in Uganda and Unyoro from access to that great inland sea; the permission to Germany to advance eastward from Damara-land to the Victoria Falls on the Zambesi, and so check all possibilities of extension to the northward from our South African Colonies; the surrender to Germany of a North

Sea island which might have been serviceable in war-time to us, and will unquestionably become of the highest value to her. What compensation," it would have been added, "for such losses can be found in the protectorate of the two small islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, a protectorate which was virtually thrown away only four years ago?" Nevertheless, when all this has been proposed by a Conservative Government, no Conservative peer in the one House, and only two or three Conservative members, none of them yet possessing political influence, in the other, can be found to give voice to those sentiments of disgust and disappointment which must fill the souls of the men who applauded the Salisbury Circular of 1878, and the Afghan War of 1878—9; who denounced the retirement from Candahar of 1880, and the refusal to re-conquer the Soudan in the years that followed 1882. The great conversion to household suffrage in 1867, is a hardly more amazing witness to the docility of the Conservative party than is their present acquiescence in Lord Salisbury's bargain. If Liberals had half as much internal cohesion and willingness to subordinate individual opinions to party exigencies as their opponents, they might keep an unbroken grasp of power for twenty years to come.

Nothing that was said in the two nights' debate in the Commons on the Heligoland Bill has tended to modify the view of the Agreement already presented in these columns. The Ministry made, through the mouth of their Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, a somewhat lame and halting defence of their action. The Opposition, on the other hand, though many of them criticised particular points, did not, as a whole, desire to reject a settlement whose rejection would inevitably produce soreness in Germany and probably involve a struggle, not unattended by risks of collision, between the pioneers of English and German enterprise. There was much regret expressed at the sale of the Heligoland, much disappointment at the neglect of the wishes of South Africa. But the general feeling was that expressed in the phrase *Fieri non debuit: factum valet*, and there was undoubtedly much satisfaction in the notion that the mouths of the Jingoës were now effectually stopped for years to come. If any Liberal Government finds it prudent in future negotiations to abate something from its strict rights, it will be able to point to the enormous concessions which Lord Salisbury has now made. Perhaps the least defensible of these concessions is that which, according to the Under-Secretary's answers in the House of Commons, has been made in the matter of Free Trade. By the Act of Berlin of 1885, the contracting Powers, Germany and England included, agreed to establish a zone of unrestricted Free Trade on the east coast of Africa from latitude 5° N. to the mouth of the Zambesi in latitude 18° S., and to use their best efforts to induce the native powers to remove all restrictions and introduce a Free Trade system. Now, however, it would seem that Lord Salisbury has assented to the claim of the Germans to set up protective tariffs along the whole line of coast which this agreement yields to them. The consequences will be not only damaging to British trade in general but probably fatal to the commercial importance of Zanzibar—a place now enjoying a trade, chiefly with British Indian ports, of £2,000,000 per annum. As the official organ of the German Foreign Office observes, "It is not Zanzibar that commands the African mainland coast, but the mainland coast that commands Zanzibar"; and as Zanzibar lived upon its trade with the continent opposite, the closing of that trade by tariffs constructed in German interests will destroy the prosperity of the place which Lord

Salisbury acquire

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Salisbury has just bartered away Heligoland to acquire.

If, however, the agreement has been feebly advocated in England, it has been powerfully justified in Germany. The official argument in its behalf published in the Berlin *Reichsanzeiger* of July 29th is a masterly and statesmanlike document, incomparably superior to the despatches presented to our Parliament. Its main object is, of course, to answer German criticisms by dwelling on the value of Heligoland on the one side, and the African rights of England on the other. It is prudently careful not to offend English susceptibilities by dilating on those points in which England has receded, as, for instance, in the region north of Bechuanaland. But it dwells with great force on the importance of a good understanding between Germany and England, showing how much each can help, as each could injure, the other; and indeed points out, what Lord Salisbury might seem to have forgotten, that the goodwill of a great naval power like England may be more helpful to Germany than Germany can in any way be to the colonial enterprises of England. A perusal of it will on the whole confirm Englishmen in the view that it would have been unwise to reject this arrangement. However weak Lord Salisbury may have shown himself, however unsatisfactory, regarded merely as a bargain, may be the bargain he has made, the fact remains that it was a matter of high import to remove causes of quarrel between two great colonising powers, and let the subjects of each have a fair chance of doing their best in a work whose ultimate results must be for the benefit of the native races. The wish that Europeans should leave natives to themselves is natural enough. But on the coasts at least of Africa it is one which cannot be gratified. Europeans will come in to trade, to hunt, perhaps to conquer; it is better that their Governments should control them than that they should be left to their own impulses of greed or violence. And nothing that even European greed or violence can do is likely to cause so much misery as intestine wars and Arab slave raids now inflict upon the peoples of Equatorial Africa.

THE REGISTRATION MUDDLE.

WITH this week again returns the yearly turmoil of electoral registration. Now stirs the most torpid political association from its normal sleep, and bursts upon the world with unaccustomed poster. Now is the active "ward-politician" importuned to "canvass" (mysterious rite!), and plagued with invitations to accept enigmatical little books containing all his neighbours' names. Now calls the dubious agent, inquisitive of dates, and impertinent as to supposititious "lodgers." Now bleeds anew the Fortunatus purse of the Parliamentary candidate, whilst he, chastened, learns how little a Corrupt Practices Act avails him.

Now strives the energetic secretary to outdo the rival Association in doubtful claims and ingenious objections; soon will he prove, by the least convincing of political arithmetic, how vastly his party has surpassed the foe. The briefless barrister scents from afar the Revision Court and a two-hundred-guinea fee; once more in six hundred fields is waged the interminable fight as to what is a house and who is a lodger; and the whole British Constitution appears temporarily to depend, not upon getting twelve men into a box, but upon printing the names of a particular set of six million electors in six hundred and seventy of the least interesting even of the "books which are not books." The

imperfection of our system of electoral representation is, indeed, an old story. It is one more case of that "froward retention of custom" which Bacon, wise old Conservative, declared to be a more turbulent thing than innovation. The official arrangements for registering the crowded dwellers in populous cities are virtually still those which sufficed when the statute of Henry VI. for the first time restricted the county franchise to forty-shilling freeholders. The industrial revolution which transformed England from a rural to an urban community, and made antiquated even our proverbs and nursery tales, did not spare from obsolescence our political machinery. Yet the electoral registration of London's five million souls is left to no better organisation than that of a rural hamlet of the last century. The "overseers" of each parish, respectable inhabitants appointed by two Justices of the Peace, with functions now impossible to discover or describe, are supposed to make out lists of the persons qualified to be electors, all of whom, the Legislature apparently presumed, must be well known to them. These lists are "published" by being affixed for twenty-one days to the church-door, which, although no doubt "the tape" of mediæval times, is no longer the most obvious fount of modern news. To add to this blaze of publicity, the lists now lie also at every post office, where seek them those bold investigators who dare to invoke the young lady at the counter from her more pleasing duty of official gossip. The vigilant householder, discovering by these devious ways that his name is omitted from the list, must make a claim, on a form which no public authority will furnish, to some official whose name he does not know, and whose address he will have almost as much difficulty in discovering as that of Prester John. Having "claimed," the would-be elector must discover when and where the Revising Barrister will hold his court; (again watch the church-door; this time no Post Office helps); then he must attend the court, and support his claim when it is reached; and if no captious objector argues that he is dead or gone away, on the ground, for instance, that a circular has been returned by the Post Office so marked, and if he is quite sure that he has already paid a particular Poor Rate, and satisfied every other technicality of an extremely complicated tangle of law, his name will be added to a register which does not begin to come into force until five and a half months after the qualifying day. If an election happens to take place during that particular year, he will be entitled (if he can find out when and where to record his vote) to exercise the proudest privilege of a Democratic citizen. If no election takes place that year, he may have the whole difficulty to go through afresh, as will certainly be the case if he has in the meantime moved. Yet the perfect citizen struggles on, for haply, by patiently and persistently pursuing his right to be registered, he may one day save the State.

Most citizens, however, fall short of civic perfection, and would inevitably lose their electoral rights if private political enterprise did not create some supplement to the official machinery. Hence we have the registration work of the local political association. In London alone some fifty thousand claims are annually sustained. It is not uncommon in provincial cities that several thousand claims should be presented, or (as at Newcastle last year) that several thousand "objections" should be made. During the first twenty days of August in our 670 constituencies over a quarter of a million claims—four per cent. of the electorate—will probably be presented to the Overseers on behalf of one party or another. Every one of these claimants

would, but for this extraneous and unofficial intermeddling, be disfranchised without appeal.

We leave it, in effect, to private enterprise to determine who, among the legally-qualified citizens, shall receive a vote. It is anarchy tempered by the caucus. Add to this defective machinery the complications of sixty years' Reform Bills without a single codification, the absurd distinction between the "occupier" of a one-room tenement and a "lodger"; the loss of qualification on changing from one to the other, a change which may occur merely by the landlord coming to sleep in the house; the disenfranchisement through admission of any member of the family to a public lunatic asylum or infirmary; the unnecessarily long period of residence required; the arbitrary date to which it must be reckoned—and it is not to be wondered at that one-third of our adult male citizens never get on the register at all. Of the six millions who are registered, over a quarter of a million possess duplicate votes, some men having as many as fifteen, or even twenty.

From this anarchy and confusion, London is a special sufferer. The London working man has to follow his work across a sea of houses covering one hundred and twenty square miles, and necessarily flits from flat to flat more frequently than the inhabitants of a smaller community. Every removal practically disfranchises him on an average for eighteen months; for London, unlike Leeds or Liverpool, does not form a single borough for purposes of "successive occupation." As a consequence, only 1 in 9 of London's population is on the register, as compared with 1 in 6 of the United Kingdom outside London, and 1 in 5 of many a provincial city. London, in fact, is not on the register, but only an arbitrarily selected fragment of it. This selected fragment, on the other hand, is so far favoured that at least one-fifth of it possesses duplicate votes. London, with one-eighth of the population of the kingdom, has only one-thirteenth of the total electorate, but enjoys at least one-fifth of the duplicate votes. It is a common occurrence at a General Election for one man to vote six times in the Metropolis alone. And yet London is not happy!

The next Registration Bill must make a clean sweep of all these anomalies. We must aim at registering as large a proportion of the people as is possible; not at keeping off as many names as the ingenious use of technicalities will permit. The necessary period of residence must be shortened to three months, or even to four weeks. The register can be made up quarterly by a salaried public officer in each parish, or group of parishes, responsible to a permanent "returning officer," who might be appointed by each County Council. With such a superintending official, the costly system of Revising Barristers might be dispensed with. The whole of the legal technicalities as to "occupation," and as to householder and lodger, can be swept away by a broad definition of residence as the sole qualification of registration, due exceptions being made for hospitals, prisons, barracks, workhouses, &c. Neither the policeman nor the pensioner, neither the invalid nor the aged outdoor pauper, need be excluded as such from our roll of citizenship. Absolute "Manhood Suffrage" in a country free from "regimentation" is an impossible dream, and it prevails, indeed, least of all in countries such as the United States and Australia, where it is nominally enshrined in the Constitution. The necessity of making up local registers of a migratory population must always exclude a considerable number of citizens from the electoral roll. But even if we cannot make "one man one vote" mean actually "every man a vote," as the people now understand

it, we can, at any rate, go much nearer to that desirable consummation. The Registration Bill which must inevitably form an early measure of the next Liberal Ministry will, as the National Liberal Federation declared at Manchester, aim at securing to every qualified citizen his full electoral rights.

GILDED FLIES.

EVERY journalist's pen has been busy during the past two days with the story of Lord Dunlo's marriage and his futile attempt to shake off the woman whom, in a moment of folly, he had made his wife. The moral—the old, old moral—has been repeated in a hundred different forms from as many different pulpits, and all the world has been invited to look on at the dreary, squalid, disgusting drama as it has been played out in the Court over which Sir James Hannen presides. There is nothing to tempt us to join our colleagues of the daily press in discussing the details of the revolting story. For not one of the men and women who have figured in the case is it possible for any ordinary mortal to feel a grain of respect or sympathy. In ordinary circumstances everybody would have felt for Lord Clancarty, who saw his son's career destroyed in a moment: but Lord Clancarty himself seemed bent upon cutting himself off even from the doubtful consolation of public pity. As for the other characters, we defy any human being who is possessed of the ordinary instincts of civilised humanity to discover one of them who ought to command our respect. It is not with this old chapter in the Rake's Progress that we need trouble ourselves; for has not the story both of hero and heroine been told already by Hogarth? But what are we to say of the general atmosphere in which these persons seem to have lived, and of the light which the evidence alike of principals and witnesses throws upon the social life of a certain class in London at the end of this present century? It is an atmosphere of music halls, and tenth-rate clubs, and gaudy restaurants, and villas in St. John's Wood—an atmosphere reeking with sordid vice and self-indulgence. It is an atmosphere breathed by men who apparently think it only a joke when they "toss up" for the possession of a woman: and by women who see no wrong in living at the expense of men who are not their husbands. Extravagance of the most wicked kind is the order of the day in this loathsome *milieu*: horses and carriages, feasting, junkettings, nights of dissipation, are constant accompaniments of the life which these people lead. "Aristocratic society!" cries the democrat with indignant scorn. But we, who are not of the aristocracy, cannot console ourselves in this Pecksniffian fashion, for the sons of dukes and earls seem to have mingled freely, and shared their tastes, with people who belonged almost to the opposite poles of society. The women who beguile their days and nights are the singers of the public halls; the men who are their rivals and companions and supplanters are Bond Street shop-keepers who have made money, and creatures like Weston, who, in trying to make it, bring themselves within reach of the police. As we look at the dismal picture which this trial has conjured up, as we think of the vice, the dullness, the prodigality, the juvenile cynicism of the performers, and remember what the realities of life are, and how there are millions in this busy London of ours to whom the cost of a single debauch on the part of the men who have been paraded before us during the past week, would almost mean the difference between life and death, between ease and anguish, our very heart grows sick. We cannot even find a passing ray of comfort in the knowledge that a stern Nemesis already dogs the footsteps of this tribe of self-indulgent idlers, and

that in due time, like all their predecessors in the long tale of profligate self-indulgence, they must, each for himself, "dree his weird." It is not of these poor wretches that we think, but of the society which has spawned them. The gilded flies are noxious enough; but it must be a dung-hill which has bred them. How long can a society, where festering corruption like this is at work, continue to exist? How long will it be before London also hears pronounced upon it the doom which ere this has overtaken cities not less famous, and alas! hardly more wicked?

THE FUTURE OF CANALS.

SIXTY years ago a famous gathering met at Manchester to celebrate the accomplishment of a great enterprise which united the two most prosperous cities of the North. This year in the same place another congress has assembled to mark the progress of an enterprise even greater, and to consider how far the commercial skill and daring, out of which the Manchester Ship Canal has sprung, may be used to revive the old water-ways and water-traffic, which it is said the railways have destroyed. The Board of Trade has recently published a Blue-book on the condition of our canals; and although Sir Michael Hicks-Beach apologised last Monday for the incompleteness of the volume, still the Department has now given to the public a body of reliable statistics on the subject such as they have never had before. Counting rivers and canals together, there are within the United Kingdom nearly four thousand miles of inland navigation. But it is curious to notice how small a proportion of these many navigable miles is found in lands like Scotland and Ireland, which one is accustomed to associate with the idea of many waters. In Scotland vessels can only travel by inland waters for 150 miles, and over half this distance the transit does not pay. Ireland boasts one great canal, which stretches for a hundred miles from Dublin to the Shannon, and some five hundred miles of water-ways besides. But in England and Wales the figures mount much higher. The Thames and the Severn, the Mersey and the Trent, the Waveney and the Yare, are pressed into the service, and the whole distance available for inland navigation exceeds three thousand miles. There is, however, a profound impression that these figures only chronicle decay, and it is to check that impression, and to ascertain whether or not it be founded on the necessity of things, that the International Congress has met at Manchester this week.

Explanations are of course forthcoming as to the reasons why our canals decline. Some of the continental delegates at Manchester seem to suspect that if the State controlled them, as it controls the great canals abroad, they would not languish as they do. But Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, as in duty bound, assures us that in England State control would never answer, and the gloomy returns from the Highland Canals, where the State has attempted to intervene, seem to bear out his words. A more popular explanation lies in the charges brought against the railways. It is known that the railways have bought up and own a third of all the canals in the country. On the surface it seems difficult to deny that the competitions of canals must injure railway traffic and tend to lower railway rates. And many little incidents illustrate, if not the desire of the railway companies to throttle the canals, at least their reluctance to develop them. The Midland Railway ingenuously admits that since it bought the Ashby and Cromford canals, "no further capital has been expended" on them. Of late the general idea seems to have been that the day of the canals was over, and that it was scarcely worth while to spend money in keeping them in use. Thus in the majority of cases the same tale is to be told. The history of the canal, which joins the Thames and

Severn, and which ranks among the ancient water-ways of England, illustrates the decline of a canal on which a railway company has laid ruthless hands. In the days of Queen Anne this canal was constructed at a cost of about a million. In 1813 it paid a little over one per cent. In 1840 it paid nearly four. In 1852, after the Great Western Railway had been opened, the dividends had fallen below two and a half. Then in despair the owners sold it to the railway for one-fifth of its cost, and now it costs the railway company from two to three times as much as it brings in. On two well-known canals, the property of railways, science still remains so undeveloped that, in places where they pass through tunnels, the only way in which the barges are propelled is by the bargemen lying on their backs and kicking at the roof and sides. Even apart from railway jealousies there is plenty in our canal administration to condemn. Until directors make up their minds to come to some decision as to the best width and depth for a water-course, the best method of traction, the most convenient size for barges, the necessity of through rates for long-distance traffic, and the possibility of making great highroads like the Grand Junction Canal of one dimension and capacity throughout, so that a cargo sent from London to Liverpool need not be transhipped some four times on the way, we shall never know how far our canal system may be utilised, or how far the pessimism of its owners is justifiable or not.

There is, however, ground for hoping that improvements are in store. Even as matters stand, most of the capital invested pays from two to five per cent., and some canals show signs of unmistakable prosperity. The Bridgewater Canal was until recently so profitable, that the Manchester Company when they bought it had to pay twice the nominal value of its capital. The Weaver Navigation in Cheshire is another financial triumph. The Aire and Calder Navigation, which tows down fleets of coal barges, with its own tugs to its own docks, is supposed in wealth to surpass all its rivals. The success of these undertakings should be an augury and encouragement for others. There ought to be room for water traffic and for railway traffic too; and even if the railway rates be lowered, the public might view that without regret. It can scarcely be in the interests of commerce that a traffic apparently so capable of development should die, and we hope that the Manchester Congress will result in a strenuous endeavour to revive the many ancient water-courses where now decay and water-lilies reign.

THE GRIM SIDE OF WAR.

IT is natural that American writers should never weary of celebrating the pomp and circumstance of their great civil conflict. The epic of the war has redeemed American literature from any reproach of shallowness. Yet the struggle was so gigantic, and the elements of tragedy, pathos, and heroism so varied, that although much has been written about that long agony, we feel that the story is not half told, that the poetry and passion of it, even in Walt Whitman's really noble lines to Lincoln, have found only the faintest echoes in literary expression. The life and death of "Uncle Abe" have been chronicled often. Military operations on both sides have found their historians. Scarcely a manœuvre of any note has escaped the analysis of rival commanders. Graphic sketches of combat have been interwoven with controversial strategy. Federal and Confederate have rallied their forces on paper, and fought their battles over again with professional doggedness. Now and then we get a glimpse of the terrible mass of suffering and horror which goes for the most part unpainted, and the heroic fortitude which remains unsung. There are descriptions which remind us of one of Vereschagen's battle

pictures, or of that awful book which recounted the realities of Skobelev's repulses from the redoubts at Plevna. But nothing brings home to us so vividly the seamy side of the American war as Dr. Mann's articles in the July and August numbers of the *Century*, about his experiences as a Federal prisoner in the South. By all who sympathised with the Confederacy they must be read with shame. No reproach for the inhuman neglect and brutal ruffianism which are here recorded falls upon the military leaders of the Secession. They observed all the honourable obligations of war. Nay, more; they paid a touching tribute to the kinship which never died out even in this fratricidal struggle, by treating their prisoners as brothers-in-arms. Dr. Mann tells us that when he and his fellow-captives filed past General Lee, that chivalrous soldier said to them, "I'm sorry to see you in this fix, boys; but you must make the best of it."

Unhappily, no such sentiment animated the gaolers at Andersonville, where more than thirty thousand prisoners were huddled together in every circumstance of privation and disease, treated with barbarous indifference, left to rot and die, and in some instances even murdered in cold blood by the man who was responsible for their safety. This miscreant, General Wirz, won no honourable memorial on the battle-field. It was his business to insult and torture the captives. On one occasion he discharged his revolver into a crowd of emaciated men who had ventured to complain. Another Confederate officer, General Winder, whose name is unassociated with any creditable deed, was responsible for the whole administration of the prison. Yet all the reports of the military and medical inspectors from Richmond, who were horrified by the condition of the prisoners, were unheeded by the authorities at headquarters, and treated by Winder with contempt. It was he who gave orders that when Sherman's army approached within seven miles of the stockade, the guards were to massacre with grape and canister the miserable wretches in their charge. Every sanitary regulation was disregarded. The swamp hard by was a moving mass of corruption. The dead never numbered less than a hundred a day, and had the war lasted a little longer, disease would have done the work which Winder would have reserved for the cannon. Attempts to escape by tunnelling under the stockade were generally frustrated, and fugitives were torn to pieces by bloodhounds. In this living hell were seen "the finest sentiment and feeling that ever actuated the human heart," surrounded by the most degrading vice. One man, who had been an incapable drunkard when he had his whisky and his liberty, was transformed into a pillar of strength, and sustained his comrades with an intellect redeemed from drink. Two hundred ruffians became the terror of the prison, and robbed and murdered their companions with impunity, till they were brought to justice by the permission of Wirz, and six of them hanged after a trial by a jury of their fellow-prisoners. A vigilance league was formed, and law roughly administered, while the sentries looked carelessly on, or aimed at promotion by shooting unhappy creatures, more like ghosts than men, in callous brutality. Worse even than depravity or murder seems the sordid greed which prompted some to drive a wretched trade by selling rations at famine prices, and make a "corner" in raw corn, which it was death to eat, when there was not a full meal for every man in the whole camp. Yet the Bible, which was the only book in Dr. Mann's possession, was read so often that not a shred remained.

From this Inferno, in which the worst passions stood out in lurid relief against the noblest virtues, Dr. Mann escaped more than once, only to be recaptured. In many an hour of desperate flight he was befriended by the negroes, who risked their lives for "Uncle Lincoln's soldiers." It is a curious historical fact that, when all was lost, the Confederates fixed their hopes on the election of General McClellan as

President. When the vote was taken in the North, the prisoners in the South were made to vote too, and, to the chagrin of their gaolers, they gave an enormous majority for Lincoln. All this time Dr. Mann never lost heart, and his courage and endurance are fairly matched by the modesty of as plain and unvarnished a tale as ever we read. Removed to another prison of the same kind, he found help by one of those coincidences which reveal the human brotherhood that reigns even in a civil war. A Confederate adjutant, who discovered that he and Mann had a common friend in a lady whose brother was a fellow-prisoner, relieved the two men from the miseries of their bondage. It is satisfactory to know that the ruffian Wirz was tried and hanged for his crimes, though Winder escaped the same penalty by dropping dead. But through all the horrors of this remarkable narrative there is one note of humanity which it is well for Americans to recall amidst the squalid strife of their party politics. We forget Wirz and Winder when we think of Robert Lee's homely kindness, touched by the sadness of the quarrel which had made men of the same blood mortal foes. "Sorry to see you in this fix, boys," makes historical amends even for the ghastly wrongs of Andersonville.

THE SPEAKER'S GALLERY.

III.—MR. FROUDE.

THE world, or that small portion of it which reads books, awaits with some curiosity, though scarcely with much impatience, Mr. Froude's promised contribution to a posthumous estimate of Lord Beaconsfield. It would argue unpardonable flippancy to suggest that the forthcoming work ought to be entitled "Dizzy, a Daub;" by the author of "Cæsar, a Sketch." Mr. Froude is sure to produce a brilliant, a dazzlingly brilliant essay. Whether it will enhance the reputation of the remarkable man whom Mr. Froude has chosen as the latest victim of his eulogy or his invective must depend in a large degree upon the question whether Mr. Froude adopts the part of assailant or the part of apologist. As a prosecutor Mr. Froude is harmless; as a judge he is inconclusive; as a professional, though perhaps not always an intentional, advocate for the defence, he is the deadliest operator in the school of historical and biographical fiction. Mrs. Candour herself provoked no more ardent protests from the friends of her unwilling clients than Mr. Froude elicited by his fascinating volumes from the surviving contemporaries or disciples of Thomas Carlyle.

Macaulay's hostile critics often make a ridiculous mistake by ignoring, wholly or partially, his *History of England*. They cannot avoid a bare acknowledgment of the fact that he wrote such a book, and that no attempt has ever been made to supersede it. But they treat it as of minor importance, and fasten upon errors in periodical criticisms, some of which were written in India, and none of which their illustrious author desired to republish. Mr. Froude's *History* covers a much longer period than Macaulay's—a period of sixty years as compared with twelve—and Macaulay's is therefore on the larger scale of the two. But apart from all questions of scale, length, and measurement, Mr. Froude's *History* is not so big a fraction of his literary work as Macaulay's was. Macaulay died at the age of fifty-nine. Mr. Froude is seventy-two, and writes as well as he ever did. Besides his *History*, which he finished twenty years ago, Mr. Froude has written "The English in Ireland," which is said to have inspired by repulsion Mr. Lecky's "History of the Eighteenth Century"; the *Life of Carlyle*, which is in many respects one of the best biographies in the language; and many slighter books, which are read by all educated men with delight. Moreover, while

Macaulay's History remains, in spite of some small blemishes and a tone of too pronounced partisanship, a great English classic and a permanent record of the Revolution, Mr. Froude's twelve volumes—especially those which deal with the reign of Henry VIII. after the fall of Wolsey, with Edward VI., and with Mary—have been positively riddled by successive attacks.

It is impossible here and now to enter into these controversies. Mr. Froude's principal assailant is the Professor of Modern History at Oxford, a man whose reputation for learning is more than European. Mr. Freeman charged against Mr. Froude, with abundant wealth of argument and illustration, inaccuracy so serious as fatally to damage the credit of any historian. He accused him, citing chapter and verse for the accusation, of putting into the mouths of old chroniclers language which they had indeed quoted, but had quoted only to repudiate and condemn. Mr. Freeman wound up a powerful attack by asking what confidence could be placed in Mr. Froude as the interpreter of the Simancas Records, which he alone had seen, when he had been convicted of such grave blunders in manipulating materials which were open to everybody. Mr. Froude has never recovered from the effects of this exposure, and is seldom quoted on any topic as a guide in whom confidence can be placed.

But Mr. Froude has given proofs of what he means by accuracy in treating of times less distant than the age of Henry, and topics more familiar than the suppression of the lesser monasteries. Barely five years ago, in a volume called, after Harrington, "Oceana," he described a visit to Australia and to New Zealand. His statements of what he saw and heard when he got there were corrected by well-known colonists, who pointed out that he could not abstain from putting a town on the right bank of a river when it was really on the left, or from making the sun set in the east and the moon rise in the west.

But Mr. Froude's innate and incurable inaccuracy is not confined to matters of fact. His misquotations from great poets are as singular as his misconceptions of great statesmen. "Never can I forget," he says, towards the close of his *Life of Carlyle*, "never can I forget the tone in which he would repeat to me, revealing unconsciously where his own thoughts were wandering, the beautiful lines—

"Had we never loved s^{ae} kindly,
Had we never loved s^{ae} blindly,
Never met *and* never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted."

The magic of true poetry is seldom more vividly brought home to the mind than when one forgets a line or a word in some immortal passage, and tries to supply it for oneself. But it would be impossible to introduce a more jarring note into verse for which "beautiful" is a faint and feeble epithet, than Mr. Froude has introduced here. "And" should of course be "or." Does Mr. Froude suppose that all the conditions enumerated by Burns must be absent to protect the lovers from broken hearts? Does he think that the tragedy would have been realised by their loving blindly and living happily ever afterwards? Does he think that people who never met can ever part? Or has his experience of the British public taught him that he need not think at all?

With Shakespeare, Mr. Froude is even less fortunate than with Burns. Macbeth fares, if possible, worse than Nancy. In those magnificent lines which begin with the reiterated organ note of "To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow," the stately phrase "dusty death" becomes the bald and trivial commonplace "dusky death." But if Macbeth suffers severely at Mr. Froude's hands, what is to be said of Imogen? Everyone knows that loveliest and sweetest of elegies, the dirge in *Cymbeline*. This is the first stanza, as Shakespeare wrote it:—

"Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;

Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages.
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust."

And this is Mr. Froude's new version:—

"Fear no more the heat of the sun,
Nor the stormy winter rages;
Now the long day's task is done,
Home art gone and ta'en thy wages.
Golden lads and lasses must,
Like chimney-sweepers, come to dust."

See what Oriel and Exeter have made of the "poor player" from Stratford-on-Avon! The historian of the Elizabethan age might have at least transcribed, if he could not remember, the simple verses of an Elizabethan lyric which still echoes through the world. These blunders are not made in a hasty article, written against time with the boy at the door waiting for copy. They occur in Mr. Froude's life of his "master," in a book intended as a permanent record of a great genius, a book which must always be read by every student of English literature. They are no mere casual slips of the pen or of the memory, "*quas aut incuria fudit, aut humana parum cavit natura*." They show either a recklessness which is almost criminal, or an incapacity for seriously apprehending the soul and substance of great poems. Mr. Froude criticised Sir George Trevelyan's *Life of Macaulay*, which Carlyle, no admirer of Macaulay, thought the best biography in English. He sneered at Macaulay in his most superfine vein, taunting him, among other things, with habitual deviation from fact. A great historical scholar read the paper, and put it down with a sarcastic smile. "When rhetoricians fall out," he said, "historians may come by their own." The remark was unjust to Macaulay. Was it unjust to Mr. Froude?

Dr. Johnson, after enumerating the frailties of Goldsmith, how he had accumulated money by every device of importunity, and squandered it by every luxury of expense, is reported to have exclaimed, "Enough of his failings; he was a very great man." Whether that emphatic testimony can without flattery be paid to Mr. Froude, posterity must judge. Mr. Froude's contemporaries would be ungrateful indeed if they did not acknowledge that his style is so exquisite as to be almost perfect. If he shines most in what purports to be historical narrative, it may be said of him as of the historian who was happiest in fiction, and the naturalist who just knew a horse from a cow, that he has handled almost every kind of writing, and yet touched nothing which he did not adorn. Only one living Englishman can be named who excels Mr. Froude in the lightness, the flexibility, the music of his prose. Cardinal Newman plays upon the English tongue as Sir Robert Peel played upon the House of Commons, "like an old fiddle." Mr. Froude owes much to a "master" whom he has treated better than Carlyle. But whatever the Cardinal may have done for him, he has done more for himself. His is the highest art, the art which conceals its own existence. No writer, except perhaps Swift in his best pieces, was ever more conspicuously free from tricks, mannerisms, and affectations. Gibbon and Macaulay were masters of their subjects. Their learning was gigantic, their industry unflagging, their style is powerful and impressive. Mr. Froude is a mere child in comparison with them, if knowledge and research are the tests by which their relative pretensions should be tried. Yet what a relief it is to turn from the mechanical sameness of Gibbon's periods, from that eternal antithesis which was to Macaulay what "*esse videatur*" was to Cicero, and enjoy the gentle flow of Mr. Froude's perspicuous pages. The happy reader forgets himself, forgets the author, forgets the time of day, forgets everything except the pleasure of being wafted through the mazes of diplomacy, or the manœuvres of a campaign, through the stirring incidents of a popular insurrection, or the intricate

subtleties of a complex character, by a breeze which never swells into a gale, and never drops into a calm.

George Eliot had a theory that classical scholarship vitiated English composition, and cited as an example in point the detestable style of Dean Milman. If scholarship means a thorough acquaintance with the best literature of Greece and Rome, there are few better scholars in England than Mr. Froude. Yet, while he never ostentatiously obtrudes stock quotations, and leaves the Gracchi to complain of sedition undisturbed, the ease and simplicity with which he manages his theme insensibly recall the great old models of every civilised country in every subsequent age.

It is difficult, and perhaps rash, to attempt analysis of beauties which charm partly because they are mysterious. But Mr. Froude's sentences would certainly be less attractive if they were not frank, and in a dignified way colloquial. Whatever may be the value of Mr. Froude's opinions, he seldom shrinks from expressing them. He writes as a highly cultivated man of the world would like to talk—with ease, grace, clearness, and a sort of careless precision. His portrait of Dr. Newman in the "Nemesis of Faith," supplemented in the later *Recollections of the Oxford Movement*, is justly famous. The essays on Erasmus in "Short Studies," superseded as they must inevitably be when Professor Jebb's brilliant lecture is published, have been the envy and despair of critics. The summary at the conclusion of the History could have been written by no one else. "Caesar," in spite of the strange parallel which Mr. Froude saw fit to draw between the founder of the Roman Empire and the founder of the Christian religion, has had more readers than Mommsen.

Mr. Froude's general view of life is profoundly cynical. Carlyle taught him to believe in force. His literary religion is a kind of Protestantism with the bottom knocked out. He may perhaps, as he says of Elizabeth and Henry IV., accept certain general truths which lie at the foundation of all religions, even his abhorred Church of Rome. His confidence in force is his weakness. Force is only an instrument of government. It is not, and never has been, anything more. Human wills and passions, the popular voice in one of its many forms, public opinion surging through a thousand channels, are behind the brute power which Mr. Froude adores, and use it or abuse it as the case may be. This fallacy on Mr. Froude's part explains his hatred of the Irish as a sentimental people, who ought to be "kept down," and his strange hankering after scenes of blood. His cruel and unmanly description of Mary Stuart on the scaffold is an even more striking illustration of perverted sentiment than the soberer defence of Henry VIII.'s enormities.

Mr. Froude is a mocker. He is fond of irony, and of paying compliments which have a sting in the tail. He has been accused of malignity, which is too strong a word. *Malice*, in the French if not in the English sense, is surely a prominent quality of his. It was once absurdly said of Lockhart that he wrote his *Life of Scott* in order to lower the reputation of his father-in-law. A similar charge has been made against Mr. Froude in the case of Thomas Carlyle. It was false, but it was not absurd. There are passages in the book which might well have been prompted by the spirit of mischief, although Mr. Froude assures us that they were in truth actuated by a spirit of reverence.

Mr. Froude's latest work of fiction—later than "Oceana," or his imaginative account of the West Indies—is "The Two Chiefs of Dunboy." It is not exactly a novel, for there is no love in it, though it characteristically treats Sir Jonah Barrington as a trustworthy witness. It contains, however, more than one passage of singular beauty, and furnishes incidentally an admirable illustration of Mr. Froude's own mind and philosophy.

A RAMBLER IN LONDON.

XIV.—AT CHRISTIE'S.

"THE day's sale realised nearly £77,000." These beautiful words are quoted from an account of the sale of the Wells collection at Christie's last May; and similar sentences constantly appear in little paragraphs of the daily papers. Those paragraphs ought never to be printed; they provoke envy and uncharitableness. One always wants either the picture or its price, and sometimes both. Why should one man be able to give 7,000 guineas for a single picture? Can any amount of money justify such extravagance? And yet it must be a profitable rather than an extravagant thing to visit these rooms with discretion. One frequent purchaser at Christie's can afford to offer the nation £10,000 on certain conditions, while many of us, who have never spent one penny on art, cannot afford to offer the nation anything except the humanising influence of our presence; and we get no public thanks for that. The season is over now; we have lost our chance of buying pictures, or porcelain, or the silver *muriole* found in Whittlesea Mere, or the Tinted Venus, or the ebony walking-stick with a gold top, containing the hair of three princesses. This last fetched £18, and another stick, although it was completely bald, realised £11; but then they had been the property of royalty. "It may be hoped," said a leader in the *Daily Telegraph*, "that the fortunate possessor of these baculine curiosities may see his way towards increasing his arsenal of regal canes." Why cannot we all write simple, unaffected English like this? It would be a profitable thing, if it were possible, to be a dead royalty and deal in walking-sticks—I mean baculine curiosities:—

"A clod—a piece of orange-peel,
An end of a cigar—
Once trod on by a princely heel,
How beautiful they are!"

One who strays quite casually into Christie's, as I did, may not find it quite come up to his expectations. There are afternoons when the fascination of high prices and excited bidding is not to be found there, when one does not find a single man struggling to "see his way towards increasing his arsenal of regal canes." I passed through a door with a catalogue hanging on either side of it into a room that was nearly all green baize. On the wicker-seated chairs, arranged in a semicircle, were the buyers, who, for the most part, were very ordinary old gentlemen. Less than a hundred and fifty years ago one might have found very exquisite people, in gems and wigs and elaborate costumes, at an auction at Christie's, if one may trust Hogarth's sketch which is now to be seen at the Guildhall. At a high desk at the further end of the room was the auctioneer, looking a trifle jaded as he drew near to the end of the catalogue. The white rose and maidenhair drooped in his button-hole; there was even a slight weariness noticeable in his voice. "Property of late Sir Charles—admirable example of—sixteen—seventeen—seventeen guineas." The numbers go up, then comes a pause, a sharp rap from the little ivory hammer, and a young man takes down the "admirable example" from the stand where it is being exhibited, and puts up the next lot. Picture followed picture; an undoubted Creswick fetched less than a tenth of the price of a reputed Turner. One was just beginning to think that the process of selling and buying pictures had a certain monotony about it, and might in time get a little wearisome, when a diversion was created. Two gentlemen at the back of the room had a difference, and were growing noisy about it. The rest of the room turned round and smiled at them, and showed great interest in the dispute. The precise point of difference was not clear. One of the antagonists, a thin, dry, very old gentleman, maintained loudly that he had been grossly insulted. The other

antagonist, middle-aged and portly, denied this, and was sarcastic. Then they exasperated one another, and maddened one another. One called the other an old fool; and the other retorted by combining a threat of personal violence with the distinct assertion that he was prevented from touching his antagonist by fear of contamination. Perhaps this was carrying sarcasm too far; at any rate, the auctioneer suggested that there was plenty of room for them outside. So they quarrelled in the hall, and were sarcastic all down the steps. Then we came back once more to the wearisome iteration; but we were very near the end of the catalogue now.

I wandered into the other rooms. There was more green baize, and many pretty things in glass cases. The silver things were the most attractive to an inartistic eye. They looked rich and heavy, fitted for the table of city magnates. They were suggestive of large incomes, well-polished mahogany, and very old port. And then I met the purchasers and spectators coming from the sale-room. The last lot had gone; that busy clerk, with his flourish of pink blotting-paper and his air of preternatural alertness, might rest his pen now. "What do I mean?" said one old gentleman angrily to another, as he passed me. "Why, that thing you were biddin' for when I was biddin'—what did you do it for?" One almost fancied that it would be possible to distinguish the purchasers from the mere spectators. The ability to spend money, even if one spends to receive as much again and a trifle for one's trouble, confers a certain air on its possessor which can be acquired in no other way. The purchaser is deliberate in his movements; he looks at home in the rooms. The mere spectator hesitates; he is unduly obsequious to the officials; and almost apologises when he is told that there are no more catalogues. He also smiles without provocation, which is a thing your regular purchaser never does. There is a way, too, of looking at a valuable cup and saucer which can never be acquired by the ignorant outsider, who does not know of what that cup and saucer are made, or what they are worth, and who has not the remotest intention of ever buying them.

I had half hoped to find the two antagonists who had violated the solemn decorum of the sale-room, continuing their little exercises in conversational bitterness in the street outside. They had gone, but I feel sure they had been saying sharp things in the neighbourhood. The atmosphere seemed astringent.

SOME VIEWS OF A PERSON OF NO CONSEQUENCE.—(Concluded.)

AS portraits are not bought for their likeness, so pictures are not valued for their merit, but solely for the name of the man who painted them. Years ago, I remember a great stir about the discovery of two landscapes by Constable. As to their beauty there were not two opinions; they were alleged to be very fine and characteristic examples of that master's style. But they had never been engraved, which caused a suspicion to arise as to their genuineness. I saw them in the auction room myself, with a silken rope drawn across them to keep off the admiring crowd. The critics, including the R.A.'s, were almost unanimous in their favour, but it was certainly "very strange," they said, that such masterpieces should so long have remained undiscovered. On the second day they were on view, a little Jew picture-dealer stretched out a sacrilegious hand, with a dirty thumbnail attached to it, and touched one of the pictures, "By the mother of Moses," he said, "the paint is wet!" What a moment before had been worth five thousand pounds at once sank to five pounds (frame included). Now to me that depreciation appears ridiculous. If the pictures were beautiful of themselves, why should they have become valueless because they were not painted by Constable? This, however, is a

digression. I never had the chance (you may be sure) of putting those pictures in my study. It would have been "an insult to art" (compared with which sacrilege is a mere misdemeanour). What *were* offered as an alternative to the grand inquisitor and the rest were some engravings from the old masters which would have given me the nightmare.

This is almost too sacred a matter, I am aware, to be spoken of by a mere mortal; but the fact is, I don't like the old masters, and especially those who devote themselves to religious subjects. Because a figure is not the least like a human being, it does not follow that it is divine. A lady may be as stiff as you please, but by putting a hoop round her head, you don't make a saint of her. There should be a difference, of course, between an early female martyr and Mr. Frith's "Sherry, Sir"; but something of the feminine sex should still, I venture to think, be retained. Otherwise you lose sympathy with her sufferings as a martyr. Moreover, though nobody can accuse persons of my class of being exacting or hypercritical, one does like a little perspective in a picture. I remember, as a child, those dreadful Khartoums—no, cartoons—by Raphael, which used to be exhibited at Hampton Court. After looking at those charming beauties of Charles II.'s time in the galleries, a visit to *them* was like going into the Room of Horrors at Madame Tussaud's, and used almost to frighten one as much. What lumps of flesh! What mountains of muscles! Though the carcases were human, how very much they reminded one of a butcher's shop! One never hears of those cartoons now, I am thankful to say; but at one time they were objects of worship. However, it was not proposed to give me the cartoons for my study. It was to have engravings from (I think) Albert Dürer. So far as I remember the specimens, they were very black and very frightful; fortunately they were allegorical, so that no distinct impression of horror was created. Still I would rather have eaten pork chops for supper every night of my life than have had such things "hanging over" me. I declined them, with earnest haste, and took the grand inquisitor and his friends almost with gratitude.

Above these charming people is suspended a row of soup-plates. As I was assured of their "appropriateness," I never ventured to ask "Why?" but a soup-plate on a wall seems to me like something out of "Alice in Wonderland," which ought to be filled with "the mock-turtle." To have a carpet with flowers on it, we are told, is such an offence against propriety as can hardly be named with decency. A child brought up thus to tread on flowers in its nursery will probably become brutalised and end his days on the scaffold; such a pattern is not only calculated to destroy all the influences of cultivation, but is an insult to the intelligence. A soup-plate upon walls, on the other hand, is the right thing in the right place. For my part I say nothing, and am only thankful they don't stick them on the ceilings.

But the soup-plates themselves—with the help of the housemaid's "steps" you may take one of them down; but you must do it very gingerly, for though it is by no means to its disadvantage to be cracked (provided it happened a long time ago), it is worthless when in pieces—are really worth your attention. As a riddle each is without a rival, for you may guess for a twelvemonth, and I will lay my life that you will never discover its merits, nor understand why it cost me ten pounds instead of one and sixpence. It has a landscape on it, with an unusually bright rainbow, and gilt edges. A doubt of the "appropriateness" of spooning soup out of a landscape with a rainbow on it may have struck its proprietor and caused him to part with his dinner service; but why, oh! why, should this specimen of it have been purchased at so high a price and stuck upon my wall? It is not beautiful; it is not even accomplished—or rather, after its accomplishment, it got chipped, for here is the scar; it is useless; it is dangerous—for it can't stick on

the wall for ever. Its merit certainly does not lie upon the face of it; it lies—well, on the back of it, in the form of a very ill-executed crown with two cues crossed and six little billiard balls, and under the whole the letter D. Without that mark the soup-plate would be a soup-plate by the table-rim, and nothing more; but having been branded on the back in that remarkable manner, it becomes worth its weight in gold. I do not say imagine the merits of any other "thing of beauty" being decided by an inspection of this kind, because delicacy forbids it; but it is surely a strange test of excellence.

"It would be impossible to replace that plate," I heard it once remarked of one of these very articles, and indeed I find it extremely difficult. Just as I have accomplished it, the library ladder slips away, and I find myself in the bookcase of my *éditions de lueur*, which has unfortunately glass doors. It was the first time for years of my visiting that receptacle, the key of which has long been lost. This was not of much consequence, since—save in the case of a Samson or a Sandow—it was impossible to peruse a volume, by reason of its bulk, without a machine made for that especial purpose, which I have seen depicted in advertisements, but never possessed. There is here every volume, I suppose, "without which no gentleman's library can be pronounced complete:" "Don Quixote," "Gil Blas," and the whole lot of them of which everybody reads—well, enough to swear by. "Bury me in what living tomb you choose, but give me my 'Don Quixote' (and a light to read it by), and I shall be content"; "Strip me of house and lands, but leave me my 'Gil Blas,' and you will never rob me of my mirth," and so on. For my part, I hope I shall never be reduced to those immortal works for my sole reading. No; nor yet to the inimitable Sterne, whose morocco binding the glass has cut most confoundedly, but nobody will ever find that out. I wonder how many even of his enthusiastic admirers have ever read "Tristram Shandy" through. The author rarely finishes a sentence, or even a chapter. It makes one wish one was behind him with a bradawl; it is like driving a gig from the Land's End to John o' Groat's with a jibbing horse.

[This article did not end here; but I dare not publish any more of it. It seems to me to strike at the root of everything.—EDITOR.]

THE WEEK.

HERE is a passage which shows what your Liberal-Unionist is capable of now:—"On all questions on which his mind works disinterestedly MR. GLADSTONE is, as he was when LORD MACAULAY wrote his celebrated essay, a Tory of the Tories. It is only on subjects on which his conduct is dictated by Parliamentary and electioneering exigencies that MR. GLADSTONE is ostensibly a Liberal." A more grossly and absurdly offensive imputation could not be devised. Needless to say it was written by a man who extolled MR. GLADSTONE through a long series of Liberal reforms.

M. JOSEPH REINACH has written in the *République Française* an appreciative essay on the character of LORD BEACONSFIELD. But many readers of a Tory contemporary, not celebrated for its jokes, must have been surprised and even shocked to learn that amongst the works, "in themselves noble and worthy of esteem," to which DISRAELI devoted himself was "the Disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Ireland." This may be M. REINACH's genuine belief; but that it should be chronicled without protest, by a Tory paper, not famous, as we have already observed, for satirical humour, is surely a scandalous portent.

MR. SWINBURNE's "Ode to Russia" in the *Fortnightly Review* should be as disconcerting to the

friends of "law and order" as MR. JUSTICE HARRISON's recommendation of lynch law. For if the Bard of Coercion is to be taken literally—always, we admit, a doubtful point—his Ode is a direct incitement to assassination. How else are we to construe these lines?—

"Down the way of Czars, awhile in vain deferred,
Bid the Second Alexander light the Third.
How for shame shall men rebuke them? how may we
Blame, whose fathers died, and slew, to leave us free?
We, though all the world cry out upon them, know,
Were our strife as theirs, we could not strike but so."

Perhaps MR. SWINBURNE will write a letter to MR. BALFOUR explaining that though his language is "infelicitous," it does not mean what it says.

A GENTLEMAN writes to the newspapers to explain that the original of the Marquis of Steyne cannot have been the MARQUIS OF HERTFORD, who was grandfather to the late SIR RICHARD WALLACE, because that notorious person was not old and *blasé* at the time of the Battle of Waterloo, and did not attain the zenith of his evil fame till long after the time at which the story of "Vanity Fair" is laid. This is one of those bits of criticism which that man of facts, Mr. Gradgrind, affects, but which are hardly to be regarded as appertaining to literature. It was the MARQUIS OF HERTFORD whom Thackeray knew that he put into his great story, and not a dead and gone MARQUIS OF HERTFORD of whom he had only heard. It must be remembered that "Major Dobbin"—the real original—not only never fought at Waterloo, but was no Major at all. He was known to many even of the present generation as JOHN ALLEN, the venerable Rector of Prees, in Shropshire, and the old college friend of THACKERAY.

MR. ROBERT BUCHANAN has been reproached for putting a political allusion into the mouth of one of the characters in that bright and entertaining play, *Sweet Nancy*. The remark relates to the impending destruction of the rights of property by MR. GLADSTONE. People who object to this do not appreciate MR. BUCHANAN's satire, for as the character in question is a fool, his political prejudices are in keeping with the rest of him.

THE latest exercise in triviality is the discovery that MR. GLADSTONE is careful to eat the sugar which remains at the bottom of his coffee-cup. We also learn that MR. W. H. SMITH cracks his morning egg with one determined tap, and puts pepper on his dry toast to brace his energies for his duty to his country. LORD SALISBURY is such a marvel of fierce decision that he never rings a bell twice. If it is not promptly answered, he goes out and requests the servant (in German) to have the goodness to come in. Equally interesting details of the privacy of our illustrious men will be published shortly.

WHAT are the present relations between KING OSCAR of Sweden and the poet BJÖRNSSON? The King was once reported to have said that there was not one of the Ten Commandments which the poet had not broken. The extreme improbability of this rumour did not prevent BJÖRNSSON from challenging KING OSCAR to a duel. The duel is not one of the prerogatives of crowned heads, so the fiery poet had to cool his ardour in exile for a while.

It is hard to say why self-advertisement, which is seemingly among soap-makers, should be indecent when practised by writers of talent. The few, however, who still hold that writing is something above a trade, and that the honour of citizenship in the republic of letters should involve the obligation of a

dignified reticence, have had cause for sorrow this week. MR. RUDYARD KIPLING has unbosomed his soul to an interviewer from the *New York Herald*, and displayed his personal attractions also. We read that "admiring pens" (whatever they may be) "have made the world familiar with the blue-grey eyes that look at one with a penetrating gaze; the resolute chin; the active, nervous, energetic stride; the manly self-poise in bearing, with a dash of boyishness withal," etc., etc. And we read that MR. RUDYARD KIPLING thinks it "awfully jolly to see the boys and girls together as I did last night at a party." We were among the first to welcome MR. KIPLING's work, and we study it with eagerness. But at the same time we submit that the eccentricities of his stride, and his emotions on being taken into ordinary American society, might pass without record in a world so crowded as ours.

MR. HENRY ARTHUR JONES is another. "The account I have heard given of MR. JONES in the world of dramatic authorship may be apocryphal" (says a correspondent in the *Daily Graphic*), "but there can be no doubt that in the preparation of his plays he is conscientiously attentive to the smallest detail. . . . The author of *Judah* always writes best in the evening, and upon the writing of a play, including the weaving of the plot and the creation of the characters, he usually spends five or six months." But conscientiousness and elaboration in art have not waited all these centuries that their value might be discovered by a gentleman called JONES. SHAKESPEARE, it is true, was culpably lax in "never blotting out a single line;" but *en revanche* that is the only scrap of tittle-tattle about his working habits that SHAKESPEARE has allowed to descend to us. And even that has the merit of being probably untrue.

MR. HALL CAINE's "dear and gifted friend," MR. WILSON BARRETT, has returned to England in the s.s. *City of New York*, and reports that he narrowly escaped being lost to us for ever. On the 5th of this month, he says, he was travelling by train over the Rockies to Leadville, when, by some means or other, it broke in two upon a steep down grade. The engineer dared not stop, but had to run a race for life with the rear end of his train. The rate of speed attained is not reported; but MR. BARRETT states that though three hours behind time when the accident happened, the train reached Leadville Station three hours before it was due!

A STATUE to VOLTAIRE was unveiled at Ferney on Sunday last by M. LE ROYER, President of the French Senate. A new railway line between Geneva and Ferney was opened on the same day, and a respectable deputation conveyed along it, together with a load of wreaths and bouquets. Two Alsatian maidens presented M. LE ROYER with a bouquet veiled in crape, and M. LE ROYER kissed them on the cheeks and assured them that he shared their sentiments. They do these things much better in France.

SOME day a pleasant little volume entitled "The Diversions of a Bishop" ought to be compiled in the diocese of Chester. It is agreeable to learn on right reverend authority that dancing is a wholesome exercise; but when the Bishop waxes as indignant over the modern way of shaking hands as if he were reproving sin, it seems to a profane mind that the episcopal duties are sometimes rather light.

If housekeepers are in earnest in wishing to benefit the unemployed in East London, they should buy BRYANT & MAY'S Matches, and refuse the foreign matches which are depriving the workers in East London of a large amount in weekly wages.

It is not generally known that MR. RUSKIN has delivered himself on the subject of cycling with even more than his accustomed energy. We are at liberty to quote from a letter which MR. RUSKIN wrote to a cyclist who had rashly counted on the approval of the master. "I not only object—but am quite prepared to spend all my best 'bad language' in reprobation of bi-, tri-, and 4-, 5-, 6-, or 7-cycles, and every other contrivance and invention for superseding human feet on God's ground. To walk, to run, to leap, and to dance are the virtues of the human body; and neither to stride on stilts, wriggle on wheels, or dangle on ropes; and nothing in the training of the human mind with the body will ever supersede the appointed God's ways of slow walking and hard working."

THIS is vigorous and comprehensive, if a little incoherent. Certainly the mind revolts from the idea of MR. RUSKIN "striding on stilts;" but has he not given us delightful descriptions of drives in his father's gig?

THERE has been much business again in the sale-rooms this week. To begin with, the autographs collected by MR. F. W. COSENS were sold at SOTHEBY's last Saturday. BURNS' "In vain would Prudence with decorous sneer" fetched £35; a letter of BYRON's from Abydos, forswearing sack ("I am tolerably sick of vice, which I have tried in its agreeable varieties, and mean on my return to cut all my dissolute acquaintance, leave off wine and carnal company, and betake myself to politics and decorum"), £32; a set of DICKENS's letters, £36; one by BONAPARTE, £32; one by SAMUEL RICHARDSON on "Clarissa," £13 10s.; and one by PAUL VERONESE, dated 1578, £34.

MESSRS. SOTHEBY were selling war-medals on Wednesday, while MESSRS. PUTTICK & SIMPSON dealt in old violins. CHRISTIE's on Thursday was full of art and literature of all kinds—porcelains, armour, furniture, tapestry, the sculptures of the late MR. J. WARRINGTON WOOD, and the library of the late DUCHESS OF BEAUFORT. The library of "CUTHBERT BEDE" has also been scattered this week, including the original MS. of "Verdant Green."

THRUMS GOSSIPS.

VII.—THE ANXIOUS MONTH.

SWEET was the jangle of the eight o'clock bell to those whom it released from their looms. Until it let Haggart out of harness, he seldom said anything memorable; indeed, he scarcely tried to do so. His hours of humour were from eight p.m. to ten on ordinary days, and after six on Saturdays. On the Sabbath he took a complete rest.

But I can recall a black month when Haggart, trying his hardest to be humorous, was barren, so that he avoided man, and sat alone by his fireside, heavy with gloom. In his most hopeful moments he decided that his humour was merely away on a visit; but as the days passed, and it did not return, terrible misgivings shook him, and he would not carry his web through the square, lest inconsiderate loiterers should ask him for the humorous assistance he was no longer able to give. At Dite Deuchars's henhouse we discussed what had come over him, with silence rather than words. When we met him, we pretended not to notice any difference. It became our custom to stare at him through his window, and then trudge sadly away.

During the whole of the Anxious Month, as it was

called, the word "humour" never passed between us and Haggart. We would have liked to talk his condition over with him; but we knew that if he was helpless to alter it himself, there was nothing that we could do, and his face told us to hold our peace. It is strange to remember that, while this shadow rested upon Thrums, Chirsty had the heart to sing at her work and dress for the Sabbath as usual.

"Na, there's nothing the matter wi' him," she said, in answer to our questions, "for he's aye braw and ready for his porridge."

"And that was gospel," Haggart admitted, after he was himself again. "I had a devouring appetite the whole month. Ay, I've heard the same o' folk down wi' the fever."

"But his humour's no what it was," we said to Chirsty.

"No," she replied, "I've been noticing he's had mair peace frae it lately."

"Do you think it'll come back?" Dite Deuchars asked in a whisper.

"As sure as winter," answered Chirsty, who always looked at the black side of things.

"You've ta'en a wecht off my mind, Chirsty," Dite said simply.

"Dite Deuchars," exclaimed Haggart's wife tartly, "dinna come here and ding me doited wi' your ring-ding-dang about humour. What is this humour that you're all gyte about? I canna thole the very name o't."

"Chirsty, woman, weel you maun ken that Tammas is a humorist."

"And a mortification to me it is. It's but an aucht days syne come the morn when a shooting gentleman in knickerbockers chaps at my door, and says he, 'Is this where the Thrums humorist lives?' 'Na, says I, very quick, 'he bides twa doors higher up. There's a water-barrel at his door.' 'The name is Haggart, I think?' says he. 'Nothing o' the kind,' says I; 'the name's Lunan.'"

"Chirsty, that was ill-dune o' you."

"I'll own no humorists, Dite Deuchars; and weel does Tammas Haggart ken that. What's humour? will it bake bannocks?"

"Tammas says it butters them."

"Havers! Will it make a bed?"

"Tammas says it softens the chaff."

"Gae awa' wi' you. If that's humour, Dite Deuchars, thank the Lord you're no afflicted wi't."

"But there's this to be said for Chirsty," Dite maintained after the Anxious Month had become a reminiscence, "she was confident the humour would come back to you, Tammas, at a time when we was all doleful, and you had even lost the heart yoursel'."

"Whether I ever entirely ga'e up hope, lads, I canna say," Haggart replied. "Mony a time I muttered to mysel', 'She's gone, she's gone, like a bird frae the nest, and she'll return no more;' but I didna, maybe, just believe that. I had a reason for no quite believing mysel'; and yet I dinna deny but what it was as anxious a month to me as to you."

"Is it true that you once thoct o' consulting the minister?"

"When I was in a sort o' despair, that thoct was in my mind, but I never gaed further than the manse-gate."

"You was wise. The minister's on the women's side about humour."

"It wasna that as fleid me; but the mair I considered the thing, the mair I seemed to hear the minister on it, and I saw him pronouncing my doom. Yes, my billies, it wasna far frae being a case o' second sight, for I heard him saying, in that solemn word o' his, 'Firstly, Tammas Haggart, your humour is as your own child; and, secondly, when the child grows lusty, it departs to seek a helpmate o' its own; and, thirdly and lastly, your's has gone like the rest.'"

"Tammas, Tammas, that's a kind o' fearsome. You make me hear him shutting the Book. But you said a minute syne that you had a reason for never quite giving up hope?"

"So I had; for though I couldna get the humour up, I kent I was far frae toom."

"You heard it roaring like a water far awa'?"

"Better than that; I had grip o't at times. Davit Lunan, have you ever been in a lazy fit, and wanted something—say, a pirn—that was lying at your feet, and yet you couldna be bothered bending down for 't?"

"I've been in that wy, Tammas."

"Weel, what did you do?"

"I—"

"Dinna answer me, for I can tell what you did. You tried to draw the pirn to you wi' your feet, and, just when you had it in the air near your hand, it plunked down to the floor again."

"And maddening it was. 'Dagon you, you thing,' I would say to it, 'I'll get you, though I should fish for you a' nicht.'"

"Ay, no doubt; but it's of sma' importance what you said. The noticeable thing is that I got haud o' my humour in the same wy. Again and again I lifted it up so far, but I could never get it to my mouth. My mind took grip o't loosely, like feet instead o' like hands."

"But surely that's humour?"

"It's humour to say what I've been saying; but to lift up humour and syne let it drap, is no more humour than hooking a trout and lossing it at the burn's edge is catching fish."

"You maun hae felt mighty queer, Tammas, wi'out humour?"

"As queer, Dite, as a woman that wakens up and finds her bairn's been stolen frae her side in the night-time."

"The astonishing thing is that you didna feel naething coming on."

"I hadna a suspicion that onything was to happen when I gaed to my bed that Teisday nicht."

"You slept weel?"

"I couldna hae slept better."

"And you had been grandly humorous that nicht?"

"I never kent it come up easier."

"And yet, when you woke, it was gone?"

"Gone utterly."

"Man, man! Was it that first day that you thoct o' trying the sea-water for't?"

"No, Sam'l. I dauredna face sich an outlay as lang as I thoct there was a chance o' its coming back o' its ain accord. I had an idea at first that it couldna keep awa' frae me if I was at some o' my particular humorous places, sich as the burying-ground. Ay, sirs, I gaed to the burying-ground the second nicht after it left me, as hopefully as though I was a young callant again, and it a lass I had arranged to meet there by appointment. I stood at my ain grave for an hour, trying to coax it back; but it never so muckle as showed its head, and syne I kent that things was serious."

"You tried a cough-bottle next?"

"It was a bottle Chirsty got frae the doctor, and I thoct I micht as weel gie it a chance. My idea was that my nerves micht be out o' order, and so have stopped the working o' my humour."

"It would hardly have been that. Working folk doesna take these grand complaints."

"Ah! but I had been in the company o' a shooting gentleman, and he micht have smitted me. However that may be, the mixture did no good, nor yet did some treacle-beer in boiling water. Mind, I'm no blaming the doctor; for in the tail o' the day it was him that cured me."

"Chirsty put a stop to the notion o' trying the sea-water?"

"She wouldna hear o't; and naturally enough, for beds would have cost threepence the nicht."

"Ay, ay, the brazen charges they make at the sea-water fair scumfishes a body."

"Weel, but that left me wi' nothing to try, and the horrible question glowering at me, namely, 'Are you just choked for the time being, Tammas Haggart, or have you run toom?'"

"What made you think o' the dictionary?"

"Sheer desperation, Dite. You'll mind I have often compared my humour to a well? Ay, then, I thoct that if I got your laddie to read out o' the dictionary to me, it would be like dropping stanes into a well; and, as you ken, if a body does that, the water's bound to rise. I thoct in that way to bring the humour higher up."

"It was a mighty ingenious notion."

"But it didna answer; maybe because the laddie got terrified among sich big words, and me aye harkening to see if they were having ony effect. Ay, and then in comes the doctor, having heard there was something ailing me. I telt him a'thing, though I hadna spoken about it to another crittur."

"He didna blood you?"

"No, no. I telt you, lads, he lauched at first. I've sometimes thoct there's a touch o' humour in the doctor, though that day he lauched when there wasna a lick o' humour in the house. Never mind that; we all make mistakes, and it's to the doctor's eternal credit that he understood my case at once, and cured me afore the ten o'clock bell had begun."

"Wi' the muckle humorous book?"

"Ay, ay; namely, 'The Decline and Fall o' the Roman Empire.' 'I see what's wrang wi' you,' he said in his thoctful wy. 'Your humour's a well, as you say; but what you need is no stanes to make it shallower, but just a little mair water flung into the pump to gie what's inside you a start.'"

"I've often started the pump in that way."

"Weel," says the doctor, 'we'll start your humour in the same manner, by pouring a little o' some other body's humour into it. That'll soon bring you to.' And, lads, he was richt."

"He sent the book to you immediately?"

"I had it by half-nine—namely, 'The Decline and Fall o' the Roman Empire;' that being, he said, the most humorous work he had in his house. Ay, Dite, your laddie had just come in wi' the dictionary, and I set him at 'The Decline and Fall o' the Roman Empire' instead. I was sitting on that stool—But you was all keeking in at the window, was you no?"

"We was, and we saw the effect."

"Ay, ay; as soon as the twa humours met, mine began to run like a pump wi' the handle lift up, and it's for you to say whether it's still running this nicht."

"Running it is. Yes, Tammas, the Anxious Month's ended. There's just one other thing I would like to speir at you. I suppose you was utterly miserable all the time the humour was awa', and had no feeling but thankfulness when it came back? You're lang in answering."

"Because it's a deep question, Davit. Upon the whole, I'm mighty glad it's back again; but I dinna deny that there was a kind o' airiness in being wi'out it—sich as a sheep may feel after its been new-shorn. For, lads, let me telt you, humour is heavy work."

J. M. BARRIE.

THE BALKAN PROBLEM.

TO many a philosophical and political student in the West of Europe it may appear that the Sultan, by his latest decision in favour of the Bulgarian Church, has purified the situation in the Balkans of some dangerous elements, and that therefore the political atmosphere has somewhat cleared. But to us, who live in that atmosphere, it seems that the sources of confusion in the Balkans have only deepened, and that therefore the elements of danger to European peace have been increased.

The Sultan has certainly given great satisfaction to the Bulgarians by approving the nomination of their bishops for Macedonia and Kossovo. But in the same measure, or rather in a potentiated measure, he has therewith provoked dissatisfaction among the Greeks and the Serbians. And very naturally so. The question was not, and is not, simply and

exclusively ecclesiastical. The question is eminently political. As much as in Russia, and even in a still higher degree, the Church in the peninsula has been made the active and devoted servant of political ideas. In reality, religious life is fast ebbing away that political life may revive. The Church is sacrificing itself in the political service of the nation. There is no doubt but that the Bulgarian bishops in Macedonia and Kossovo will immediately appoint, in every Serbian and Greek town and village of their dioceses, priests and teachers whose task will *not* be to preach the Gospel and teach science, but who will exclusively proselytise for the Bulgarian national idea, and work by all and every means to make the new generation grow up attached to Bulgaria. Of course, Greek and Serbian bishops in Macedonia, if they had been appointed, would have followed just the same tactics, serving their own national ideas.

By this concession to the desires of the Bulgarian Government the Sultan has sanctioned the systematic Bulgarianisation of Macedonia and Kossovo; he has solemnly, though indirectly and perhaps unintentionally, designated the Bulgarian nation as the rightful heir of those two important provinces of his empire; therefore the jubilation in Bulgaria and the consternation in Serbia and in Greece.

The excitement amongst the Serbians is very great indeed and very intelligible. The Serbians of Macedonia have been sacrificed to the Bulgarians, who form only a part of the population. But this is not all. The Bulgarian bishops have obtained a new domain for their political zeal in the Kossovo Eyalet, a province stretching from Novi Bazar to Uskub, the old residence of the Serbian Czar Dushan, a province inhabited exclusively by Serbians and Albanians and perfectly free from Bulgarian colonists—Kossovo, around which cluster the most sacred and the dearest traditions, the most cherished hopes, of the whole Serbian nation! It is absolutely impossible for the Serbian Government to let this matter rest where it is, and very likely we shall soon hear of energetic protests and perhaps of something more than protests.

Besides, the question has an international bearing in more than one point.

Bulgaria, in spite of the open enmity of Russia, and in spite of all sorts of obstacles thrown in her way, scores an enormous political success. If that fact has any political moral to teach, it is plainly this: that it is possible for the Balkanic nations to forward their own national interests without the help of Russia, and even against her opposition!

Serbia, through her present Radical Government, has thoroughly attached herself to Russia, and follows faithfully the guiding winks from St. Petersburg. To prove its devotion to the Czar, the majority of the Serbian press has boldly provoked the anger of the neighbouring monarchy of Austro-Hungary. All this has been done in the firm belief that Russia is not only disposed but able to protect the interests of the Serbian nation. But until today the results of such policy have not been at all encouraging. The unsatisfactory relations with two immediate neighbours—Hungary and Bulgaria—have had a decidedly unfortunate reaction on the economical and financial position of the country, and the financial difficulty has prevented the Government to cope successfully with the question of internal security. With all the Russian support at its back Serbia not only has not seen anything done for Bosnia and Hertzegovina, but has had to see Mr. Stambouloff morally conquer Macedonia and place his political agents in the very Sanctuary of Serbian Kossovo!

It is very clear what political moral could be deducted from these facts. It becomes quite evident that a Balkanic nation, with all Russian support on its side, may see some of its vital interests sacrificed. And it is significant, though it is not surprising, that the Serbian press, till now so full of hatred against the Triple Alliance, and so full of admiration of Russia, begins to ventilate the question: "Is the

Czar *unwilling* to help? or *unable* to help?" It is this question that has so much alarmed the Russian Minister in Belgrade, that he has thought it necessary to inform Mr. Giers that the appointment of the Bulgarian bishops in Macedonia and in Kossovo, is a severe blow to Russian influence in Serbia.

The Sultan's anxiety not to offend Russian susceptibilities by the recognition of Prince Ferdinand and yet to do something for the Bulgarians, has placed the Czar in a peculiar dilemma. If his Russian Majesty does not move in the question at all, he will jeopardise his ascendancy in Serbia. If he moves, and by his pressure in Constantinople forces the Sultan to take his Iradé back, he may unwillingly provoke the declaration of Bulgaria's independence, and eventually compromise in other ways also the peace of Europe.

There can be no doubt that the Sultan acted in good faith, following the wisest advice of his wisest advisers. But therein lies the fatality of the case, that just the very measures undertaken with the express purpose of adjourning the explosion of the crisis, seem to carry us nearer and nearer to that crisis.

Belgrade, 25th July.

M.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE NEXT HOME RULE BILL.

SIR.—Mr. J. Colquhoun Reade, in last week's *SPEAKER*, says "he thinks it is high time we had some notion of the general bent of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule scheme," and instances Mr. Asquith's similar demand. To me, as it must to others, it appears most strange to see and hear this demand in the many forms, and from the many quarters, we have had it for the last four years. Almost immediately after Mr. Gladstone was defeated on his Home Rule and Land Bills, he very patiently and painstakingly answered all the points of objection to his Bills—more particularly, perhaps, as affects the Home Rule Bill than the Land Bill. Mr. Chamberlain, ostensibly on behalf of the seceded wing of the Liberal party, formulated a detailed and expressly worded document embodying the objections they entertained, and upon which the split had taken place. From that period until now, the matter has been completely thrashed out. The Round Table Conference is forgotten, so are Mr. Gladstone's speeches on the disputed points—notably those delivered at Singleton Abbey and at the Memorial Hall in Farringdon Street—expressly delivered to meet and satisfy such as were in doubt about the extent of concession which might be expected from Mr. Gladstone and his followers. Surely it is well-nigh impossible to make people understand the position more clearly than Mr. Gladstone has striven to do, short of actually tabling his Bill now!—a step which even his detractors, and those in partial agreement with him, do not go the length of demanding, knowing the unreasonableness of the request, and the utter impossibility of dealing with the question in that manner.—Yours truly,

JAMES WALKER.

Birmingham, July 28th, 1890.

SIR.—In his letter published in your last issue Mr. J. Colquhoun Reade urges the advisability of Mr. Gladstone's defining more minutely than he has hitherto done, the terms of his next Home Rule Bill, and gives his reason for asking this in the words of the Scotch proverb, "It is ill to buy a pig in a poke."

Will you allow me to point out in your columns that if Mr. Reade and those who think with him "buy a pig in a poke" in voting for Home Rule at the next General Election it will be their own fault and no one else's?

There are obvious reasons why it would be injudicious for Mr. Gladstone to define the terms of his next Home Rule Bill, whereas there is no reason whatever why anyone who has any scruples about advocating Home Rule for Ireland should not declare publicly what safeguards or conditions he requires to be satisfied before he can support any Home Rule Bill, and it seems to me that Mr. Reade and those who agree with him would be doing a great public service if, instead of continually calling on Mr. Gladstone, they would themselves state what are the conditions which they want satisfied.

When, however, Mr. Reade fears that Mr. Gladstone may "again keep his followers completely in the dark as to his intentions," he does not appear to see that he is fearing an impossibility.

Mr. Gladstone has already produced a Home Rule Bill which shows clearly what his intentions were in 1886, and no one has

any right to suppose that Mr. Gladstone's intentions have changed since 1886 except in so far as Mr. Gladstone has himself declared them to have changed. Mr. Reade has therefore a definite plan to criticise, and if he or others would not support Mr. Gladstone's former Bill, if reintroduced with the changes Mr. Gladstone has promised to make in it, they are not treating Mr. Gladstone or the Home Rule Party fairly if they continue to call themselves Home Rulers, and yet do not say what further changes they require.

Mr. Gladstone has himself repeatedly invited such criticism, notably with regard to the treatment of Ulster. As he has said, the Bill of 1886 "is dead," and therefore the ground is clear for framing a new one.

Mr. Gladstone's position appears to be this. He says in effect "my great object is the establishment of an Irish Parliament and an Irish Executive to deal with exclusively Irish affairs," and he has laid down five further conditions which must be observed, only two of which are in the nature of restrictions upon the scope of the Bill.

But of course, some politicians may fairly enough say, "I will agree to an Irish Parliament and Executive under Mr. Gladstone's conditions if certain further conditions are satisfied, but not otherwise." If any politician takes up this position, and it appears to be the position of Mr. Reade, Mr. Gladstone in effect replies, "What are these further conditions which you require? Let me hear them, that I may satisfy them if I can."

Hitherto there has been only one case in which such a position has been taken up. There were certain politicians who said, "We will support an Irish Parliament and Executive if the Irish Members are retained in the Imperial Parliament, but not otherwise," and Mr. Gladstone at once met them by agreeing to their conditions.

This being the case, it seems to me that it is the duty of Mr. Reade to formulate the conditions he wants satisfied. The matter is of real importance to Home Rule candidates, for if any one of them shares in Mr. Reade's scruples, and does not get them satisfied before he is returned to Parliament, and then, when the next Home Rule Bill is proposed, says, "My constituents sent me to support Home Rule, but this is not the kind of thing they intended me to support," I am certain his constituents will tell him, "If we had had any scruples we would have got them satisfied before we voted for you, and if you had any you ought to have got them satisfied before asking us for our votes."

The Bill of 1886 is dead, and therefore this is the time for getting such scruples satisfied. But the Bill is on record as evidence of Mr. Gladstone's intentions, and if those who call themselves Home Rulers do so without laying down any conditions they will have no right to grumble if Mr. Gladstone reintroduces his old Bill with the one change of the retention of the Irish Members at Westminster.

But, more than this, those of us who are striving to bring about the thorough satisfaction of the Irish people at the next Election have a right to know what it is that the doubtful or weak-kneed amongst English Home Rulers are wanting; and if those who share Mr. Reade's scruples will not tell us what those scruples are, we can only suspect that they are not prepared to heartily accept the main proposition of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Policy, viz.—that an Irish Parliament and an Executive responsible to it shall be set up in Dublin, having full power to deal with exclusively Irish affairs;—and consequently we shall be tempted to treat them as political enemies, and not as friends.

—I remain, Sir, Yours faithfully,

E. J. C. MORTON.

Home Rule Union, 9, Bridge Street, S.W.
July 30th, 1890.

A LITERARY CAUSERIE.

THE SPEAKER OFFICE.

Friday, August 1st, 1890.

NEXT to the spectacle of a good man struggling with adversity, there is nothing, to my mind, so moving as the sight of a naturally amiable and inoffensive creature in a towering rage. He is not to the manner born, so the necessities of the situation drive him into rhetorical extravagance of which a really choleric person would not be guilty. He fumes and raves without the smallest regard for the proper proportion of things. He tears his passion to tatters, and out-Herods Herod, and leaves everybody amazed—perhaps a little sad.

This is the effect produced by Mr. W. D. Howells's performance in this month's *Harper*. Mr. Howells is at bay. Anonymous persons, both in England and America, have scoffed at him for some time. He has borne their gibes at his judgment and their burlesques

of his pretensions quite long enough. Now he swoops upon them and screams for their blood. There is a legend somewhere about the awful things that happened when the Baron called for his Boots. But the scene which then ensued is nothing to the terrific frenzy of Mr. Howells. "Masked bravos that you are," he cries to his assailants, "why don't you come out into the light, and let me know your names and addresses? Why stab in the dark, and shoot from behind hedges? If you are only Brown, Jones, and Robinson, what right have you to wear the dignity of the journals you represent, and wield weapons provided by editors who let you loose upon respectable and high-minded authors?"

I am not satisfied with this paraphrase of Mr. Howells. Compared with the original it is weak. Of literary criticism Mr. Howells affirms that it presents "a constant spectacle of ferocity, incompetency, and dishonesty." He says that in return for his own "invariable courtesy," he has been made the victim of "the insolent and arrogant behaviour" of anonymous journalism. The anonymous critic "wears a mask chiefly that he may the more securely give pain and more of it." "In the interests of common sense and common decency," "critical anonymity" ought to be abolished. A time will come "when it will be regarded as monstrous and dishonourable for a review to keep an anonymous critic," who is "an arrogant, bullying, blundering pedant," and who corrupts the public with "almost inevitable savagery and dishonesty."

Now what on earth has put the poor man into this choler? What reason is there for supposing that nearly the whole race of professional critics are knaves and assassins simply because they have treated Mr. Howells with disrespect? The hurly-burly has nothing to do with his novels. Few people regard those works as marvels of genius; but they have a considerable public, and their merits are fully appreciated. The unmaking of Mr. Howells is his assumption of the guardianship of American literature. He is not content to write fiction. He is always laying down the law about his art, and advancing theories which have provoked the derision of the literary world in both hemispheres.

For example, Mr. Howells maintains that the author of "a good book" has learned "all that is knowable about it, and every strong point and every weak point in it, far more accurately than any one else can possibly learn them." So, as far as the author is concerned, the critic is useless, even the critic whose name and baptismal certificate have been given up to Mr. Howells. "Almost the universal experience of authors," we are told, is that they have never profited by criticism. Very likely; but the inference drawn by Mr. Howells's simple mind, that the author is therefore the best judge of his own work, is subject to very large modifications. Moreover, we are familiar with that egotism which blinds an author to the true state of affairs when his faults are corrected by others and not by his own unerring penetration.

But the peculiar glory of Mr. Howells is that he has undertaken the very function which he deprecates in other people. He professes to know that "English art" is unsuitable to the American genius. I am far from disputing the proposition that the literature of a country should be coloured by the conditions of the national life. But this has its limitations, and even Mr. Howells will not pretend that Hawthorne's best work, "The Scarlet Letter," is as racy of the American soil as a Presidential election. One of the most agreeable stories Mr. Howells has written, "A Foregone Conclusion," has next to nothing to do with America. You cannot

positively limit any art within geographical boundaries, and give it a climate as well as a complete code of manners.

This, however, is what Mr. Howells has tried to do. Inspired by the laudable ambition to create a literary self-respect amongst his countrymen, he has gravely encouraged every freak of American humour and extolled every monstrosity. He has invited us to believe that humanity owes a debt to Mark Twain for that vulgar buffoonery, "A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur." As Mr. Howells denies the authority of "English art," I might fairly ask him to beseech his national idols to keep their coarse jests within the confines of their own continent and their own traditions.

Growing more and more extravagant, Mr. Howells has solemnly praised the exquisite humour of the American stage. Farces which are known to American playgoers under the general designation of "variety entertainments" have been lauded as if their authors were Sheridans or Molières. I remember one piece, *A Hole in the Ground*, in which the principal low comedian is discovered without his clothes. This prodigy of native drollery was discussed by Mr. Howells as if it were *Twelfth Night* or the *School for Scandal*. Such utter incapacity to take the true measure of things has excited so much mirth at last even in America, that Mr. Howells is driven to protest against the ingratitude of his fellow-citizens.

He wanted to persuade them that a reporter's sketch of a fire was literature because it was actual, and that "the poor funny man and the lowly paragrapher" were entitled to the halos of literary distinction. All this proceeded from the desperate anxiety to set up canons which are not recognised in England, and to make every scribbler in the Union believe himself a man of letters. This theory of democracy is too much for American common sense; and Mr. Howells mournfully admits that his attempt to establish the equality of the New York reporter with Dickens and Thackeray is not much appreciated beyond the editorial room of *Harper's Magazine*.

Here, then, is the cause of all this violence. This is why the anonymous critic is denounced as a bravo. There is not a literary man in England or America who supports Mr. Howells's amazing doctrines, and so we are all a set of rogues, and hanging would be too good for us. As for the anonymity of criticism, that is an interminable subject which I am not going to discuss now at any length. But Mr. Howells's reasons are like Gratiano's—two grains in a bushel of chaff: when found, they are not worth the search, and the chaff is not even amusing.

Mr. Howells thinks it very dreadful for a journal to change its opinions with a succession of anonymous cut-throats. How inconsistent of the *Saturday Review*, for instance, to be so jealous for the glory of Thackeray now, though it disparaged him thirty years ago! Dear me! And how absurd for the English monarchy to be constitutional now, when a hundred years back it was almost autocratic! Why on earth should a journal, more than any other institution, be expected to maintain a standard of consistency, when everything around it is subject to the changes of time?

Mr. Howells cannot even be accurate as to points of literary history. He says Thackeray "habitually spoke" of the *Saturday* as "the *Superfine Review*." Well, that occurs just once in all his writings. In the "Roundabout Papers," if Mr. Howells will take the trouble to look, he will find, in the essay called "De Juventute," that the *Superfine Review* had implied that Dickens and Thackeray were not

"true gentlemen." But in the same volume, in the "Roundabout" entitled "Nil Nisi Bonum," Thackeray expressly commends the *Saturday Review* for its article on Macaulay. "It is a good sign of the times when such articles as these appear in our public prints about our public men."

But let Thackeray teach Mr. Howells a lesson in temper, forbearance, and sound discretion. When he thought he had reason to complain of injustice, did Thackeray ever demand the name of his reviewer? Did he lash himself into a silly passion about masked bravos? No critic in our own or any other day ever received such a terrific scourging as Thackeray administered to the anonymous gentleman who cut up the "Kickleburys on the Rhine" for the *Times*. The victim thoroughly deserved his fate, though his fatuous insolence, had it stood simply on its own merits, would have been beneath contempt.

But his opinion was the opinion of the *Times*, and so Thackeray treated him as "Jupiter Jeames," and lashed his miserable back with such scorn and contempt that the man must have wished himself dead. In the Tower they show you the block on which eminent persons parted with their heads. I often wonder whether at Printing House Square they keep memorials of the rather numerous disasters which have happened to the priests of the oracle.

Yet Thackeray never called for the name of his assailant. Probably he knew it; but that is not to the point. I remember the late W. H. Wills told me that the day Sam Phillips died, Thackeray rushed into the Reform Club and cried: "Poor Sam Phillips has gone. He was one of the best fellows that ever lived." Phillips was a reviewer on the *Times*, and Wills thought it not unlikely that he wrote the article which provoked the "Essay on Thunder and Small Beer." But Thackeray never dreamt of the preposterous theory that a man ought not to express an opinion in print unless he puts his name to it, and that he ought to write no criticism which he would not repeat to the author's face.

Poor Mr. Howells! He has my sincere commiseration. As a novelist he is occasionally interesting; as a critic he is a melancholy failure; as the founder of a patriotic school of American literature he is as earnest and as grotesque as Don Quixote in the helmet of Mambrino.

L. F. A.

REVIEWS.

HIS BROTHER'S FLOWER-BEDS.

THE GENTLE ART OF MAKING ENEMIES. By J. M. Whistler.
London: William Heinemann. 1890.

THE British Art-critic being (to spoil one of Mr. Whistler's best sayings) more of a Briton than a critic, cannot be expected to know when he is beaten, or even when he is dead. To tell the unfortunate truth, a certain gift of humour is necessary to a man if he would know when he is beaten. But an impartial spectator of the fray may give an opinion on the issue, though modestly disclaiming that gift, and we therefore venture the decision that Mr. Whistler has beaten his critics all along the line. This decision involves a corollary, which is that, since "completeness is a reason for ceasing to exist," Mr. Whistler should lose no time in committing *felo de se*—as a controversialist. He is a pretty fighter till he begins to jump on the body. Then he becomes indecent; and the worst is that he has no friends left whom one can advise to take him away.

In his "Gentle Art of Making Enemies" (London: William Heinemann. 1890.) the section containing the report of the famous Ruskin trial, with marginal

annotations, is as cruel as it is beautiful. The *marginalia* are but quotations from Mr. Ruskin's own works; yet the punishment is horrible out of all measure. "Of course," said Sir John Holker in his speech for Mr. Ruskin, "if the jury found a verdict against his client, he would have to cease writing." Turning to the margin of the report, we read this one sentence from "Modern Painters," vol. v.: "It seems to me, and seemed always probable, that I might have done much more good in some other way." "Mr. Ruskin," said the Attorney-General, "subjected Mr. Whistler's pictures, if you choose, to ridicule and contempt:" and in the margin beside this Mr. Ruskin has ridicule and contempt heaped on him out of his own mouth. "Vulgarity, dulness, or impiety will indeed always express themselves through art, in brown and gray, as in Rembrandt.—*Modern Painters*." Only this and nothing more: but 'twill serve, as Mercutio says.

There is something akin to fiendishness in the malice that could exhume this *bêtise* from a man's early writings and present him with it now in his old age. Almost more genial is the comment on Mr. Frith, who was examined as witness and said, "I am an R.A., and have devoted my life to painting. I am a member of the Academies of various countries. I am the author of the 'Railway Station,' 'Derby Day,' and 'Road to Ruin.' I have seen Mr. Whistler's pictures, and in my opinion they are not serious works of art," etc., etc. And to this is appended one little quotation from Mr. Frith's volume of *Recollections*, lately published—"It was just a toss-up whether I became an Artist or an Auctioneer;" and a single "reflection" by Mr. Whistler—"He must have tossed up."

If this be held cruel, let the provocation be also considered. Here was a true artist—as even the public now admits—translated because his art was something individual and not understood. What appeal had he except to a jury "of his peers"—who, according to British jurisprudence, may be twelve grocers? Mr. Whistler unwisely made that appeal. Baron Huddleston was very funny; gazed at the famous nocturne of old Battersea Bridge, and wanted to know "which part of the picture was the bridge?" The Attorney-General wanted to know how long it took the artist to "knock off" (his very words) a nocturne: being told "two days," wanted to know if Mr. Whistler had the impertinence to ask two hundred guineas for the labour of two days. (A singer can earn this amount in a night, according to the papers, and of course many drysalts do it in two hours). "No," said Mr. Whistler, "I ask it for the knowledge of a lifetime." But of course the jury held that a picture representing an effect of colour at 11 p.m. should contain as much detail as one painted at noonday. So he obtained one farthing for damages on the strength of reasoning that would compel an artist who sketched a boat on the Red Sea to put in the bones of Pharaoh's warriors whitening underneath, or one who painted the Matterhorn from Zermatt to turn his canvas round and put in the Italian side on the back.

But Mr. Whistler's quarrel with the critics goes deeper than this. He demands that every artist, in all his works, should be judged by his peers, *i.e.*, by men who have served an apprenticeship to art. At present the judges of pictures are literary men, and they naturally hanker after "literary" painting—pictures of sentiment, passion, philanthropy, etc.—while colour and *technique* are to them secondary matters, because matters of which they know next to nothing. "Cannot," writes Mr. Whistler of Mr. Swinburne, *à propos* of an article in the *Fortnightly*, "cannot the man who wrote 'Atalanta' and the 'Ballads' beautiful—can he not be content to spend his life with his work, which should be his love, and has for him no misleading doubt and darkness—that he should stray about blindly in his brother's flower-beds and bruise himself? Is life then so long with him, and his art so short . . . ?"

It is an appeal at once dignified and pathetic: but we doubt if it will ever be granted. "That writers should destroy writings to the benefit of writing is reasonable," says he, and straightway falls into the trap he has been indicating. It is not so. Novelists criticise Poets, and Historians criticise Novelists, yet what does one know of the other's art? They all write with ink on paper, but they are whole heavens asunder. Silence is the only decent course: for no serious artist, poet or novelist, really cares to criticise his true brother in print. He may care to give help, if help be asked, but he can always mark it "Private" and send it by post.

And few should preach. Those artists who are worth listening to can employ their time better in painting. Some words, now and then, might gratefully be allowed to Mr. Whistler when he inclines to speak so admirably as this: "The custom of 'Remarque' emanates from the amateur, and reflects his foolish facility beyond the border of his picture, thus testifying to his unscientific sense of its dignity." Or again:—"To say to the painter that Nature is to be taken as she is, is to say to the player that he may sit on the piano."

To print such words as these side by side with cheap flouts at "Arry," quarrels with the newspapers, talk of "scalps," "bagmen," etc., etc., is the cheapest and nastiest literary taste, and only proves Mr. Whistler's general proposition that an artist should not step outside his art. The book may be a piece of monumental self-sacrifice, however. Mr. Whistler may have "given himself away" for our instruction. Certainly, if literary men err in taste in the province of art as Mr. Whistler errs in the province of literature, they have made sorry fools of themselves. It is probable they have. For few could be so richly equipped as Mr. Whistler for an excursion into alien realms. He has wit, style, brevity—cardinal literary virtues; yet he "bruises himself on the flower-beds" of letters.

It is always much sweeter to proffer a lesson to others than to sit down and digest it ourselves. So let us beg Mr. Whistler to get back as soon as may be to his easel on the far side of the hedge. We acknowledge his kindness in throwing stones when we poked our noses over the stile: but he has no business to be in here gathering them up again. It is really high time he began to paint a bit more.

THE ELIZABETHAN JESUITS.

A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE CONFLICTS BETWEEN JESUITS AND SECULARS IN THE REIGN OF QUEEN ELIZABETH, WITH A REPRINT OF CHRISTOPHER BAGSHAW'S "TRUE RELATION OF THE FACTION BEGUN AT WISBECH." By Thomas Graves Law. London: Nutt. 1890.

MR. LAW has in this volume given us a very curious and instructive chapter of English ecclesiastical history. The sudden collapse of the Papal power in England on the accession of Queen Elizabeth is startling. "Never," says Mr. Law with truth, "had a Church so completely gone down before the first blow of opposition." The parish clergy throughout England, with the exception of an insignificant fraction, accepted the Book of Common Prayer, and the laity who had attended the churches during the reign of Mary attended them still. This went on for the first dozen years of Elizabeth's reign, and there is some evidence to show that the Pope made overtures to acknowledge Elizabeth's right to the crown and also the use of the English Prayer Book, if the Queen would on her part acknowledge his Supremacy. The Queen was firm on that point, and was accordingly excommunicated. That of course induced a number of the laity and clergy to withdraw from the worship prescribed by law. Still the realm remained tolerably tranquil. The great bulk of the people, of all classes, conformed to the secular and ecclesiastical order of things. This state of things continued down to the year 1580. "Several of the former [i.e.

Marian] bishops were dead, others were in prison or on parole, or fugitives abroad. There was no attempt on the part of Rome to fill up vacant sees or to provide for ecclesiastical organisation and government." If Elizabeth had succeeded Henry VIII. it is probable that the course of the English Reformation would have been very different. The Papal power would certainly have been effectually abolished, but the change in the externals of public worship would have been less sudden and violent. The accession of Edward VI. was in that respect a misfortune. Too young to have any decided opinions of his own, he vacillated between the influence of Cranmer (whose instincts were conservative) and the leaders of the foreign Reformers; so that the ecclesiastical legislation of his short reign is a mass of contradictions. The First Prayer Book was the outcome of Cranmer's cautious mind; the Second Book was the offspring of foreign influence, and was very distasteful to Cranmer. The consequence of bending the bow too suddenly in the direction of Calvinism was the reaction under Mary; while the excesses of that reaction again made the people acquiesce all the more readily in the moderate yet firm policy with which Elizabeth began her reign. The leading Puritans, who had fled in the reign of Mary, now returned with more extreme opinions than ever; but the Papal party practically disappeared, and, but for foreign intrigues and menaces, would probably never have emerged into political importance. Mr. Law's scholarly volume gives us the history of that curious episode. The few remaining adherents of the Papacy in England were, with hardly an exception, loyal to the Queen, though dissenting from the established religion. In this state of affairs the Jesuits intervened, and strove, with all the arts identified with their name, to get rid of Elizabeth. When foreign invasion failed, assassination was devised. The prime mover in all this was the Jesuit Parsons, a man of singular energy, resource, and audacity, but utterly unscrupulous. Mr. Law's book is a record of the steps taken by Parsons and the Jesuits to get complete control of the Papal organisation in England, and the result was an eight years' most bitter contest between the Jesuits and the secular priests in this country. The details of the quarrel are given at length in Mr. Law's book. "The faction led by the Jesuits contended for the Spanish Succession and the subjection of England to the Pope by force of arms. Their opponents were for the King of Scots (James VI.), whether Catholic or Protestant. The one party upheld the Papal claim to depose princes, while the members of the other party came to protest that in case of any attempt to enforce such a claim they should be bound in conscience to defend their Sovereign in defiance of all ecclesiastical censures. These same men aimed at securing some measure of toleration for their religion, and at establishing a *modus vivendi* with the State. The Jesuits were for war to the knife, and, for obvious reasons, detested the thought of toleration." The language of controversialists in that age was generally violent, but the billingsgate with which the Secular and Jesuit priests pelted each other is almost unparalleled. "Much has been written," says Mr. Law, "of the religious enthusiasm of these men, their undoubted courage and heroism under the rack and on the scaffold. We have here the reverse of the medal, but no less a faithful portrait." Mr. Law brings out with much force the fact that the priests put to death in Elizabeth's reign suffered for treason rather than for religion. The Pope was at the head of a foreign confederation for getting rid of Elizabeth by any means, and the mission priests in England were naturally regarded as the emissaries of foreign Powers which scrupled at nothing—a suspicion well founded in most cases, and especially true as regards the Jesuits. But for the details of these things we must send our readers to Mr. Law's most interesting volume. Nowhere else can they find so complete a record of the facts.

VENETIAN STATE PAPERS.

CALENDAR OF STATE PAPERS AND MSS. RELATING TO ENGLISH AFFAIRS IN THE ARCHIVES OF VENICE. Vol. VII. 1558-1580. Edited by the late Rawdon Brown and the Right Hon. G. Cavendish Bentinck, M.P. Printed for Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

REPORTS of intelligent foreigners on our own affairs have an obvious value, and no more favourable specimen of the foreign reporter can be found than the Venetian ambassador of the sixteenth century. It is nearly thirty years ago that the late Rawdon Brown discovered that the Venetian reports on English affairs were still extant in the Venetian archives, and the seven volumes of transcripts which have been published since 1864 give no cause to regret Lord Palmerston's decision (arrived at in 1862) to print them at the public expense. The gratitude which Rawdon Brown's services claimed from serious historical students must now be extended to Mr. Cavendish Bentinck, who has edited with scrupulous care the latest volume which lies before us.

Through no fault of the editor, this instalment of Venetian State Papers is disappointing. They cover the first twenty-two years of Elizabeth's reign, and might be expected to throw some new light on a very eventful period in English history. But, unfortunately, Giovanni Michiel, the Venetian ambassador in London under Queen Mary, left this country in attendance on King Philip in July, 1557, and until 1602 "no authorised diplomatic functionary was accredited by the Signory of Venice to the Court of England." The reasons of the absence of a Venetian ambassador for so long a period are not easily intelligible. It may have been due to the Signory's resentment of Elizabeth's avowed hostility to Rome; it certainly was not due to any interruption in the commercial relations between the two countries, for many Venetian merchants resided in London throughout Elizabeth's reign, and received frequent visits from their countrymen. The merchants, indeed, desired the renewal of diplomatic intercourse. In 1560 they elected one of their number as vice-consul; and, although their choice did not meet with the approval of the Republic, a nobleman was sent to London by the Venetian College to act as consul in 1563. But on his return home in 1570 the appointment was not renewed. The Venetian Republic was by no means indifferent as to what was passing in England during the period, but the senators were content to obtain their information from their ambassadors in France and Spain, and it is the reports collected by those ambassadors which chiefly fill the volume before us. Diplomatic gossip is lavishly represented, and although it effectively illustrates the importance attached on the Continent of Europe to every detail of the policy of Elizabeth and her Ministers, it lacks the minute description of domestic episodes which lends an unique interest to the earlier Venetian accounts of English affairs. Many of the papers here transcribed deal with the wayward negotiations for Elizabeth's marriage with the Duke of Alençon. Chiefly written in France, they are valuable for the full light they throw on the French aims in the matter, and form an important supplement to the Hatfield letters on the subject lately calendared by the Historical Manuscripts Commission. But despatches which report at second or third hand proceedings in England do not always merit literal acceptance by critical students.

The only papers in this volume supplying really valuable first-hand reports of English affairs are seventeen letters sent from London by a person calling himself "Il Schifanoja" to the Mantuan ambassador at Brussels. Their dates run from 17th December, 1558, to June 27th, 1559, and of the queen's coronation, of court entertainments, and of proceedings in Parliament within the six months, they give reports which would do no discredit to a modern journalist. These documents were discovered by Mr. Rawdon Brown in the State

Archives of Mantua, and it is regrettable that they are not more numerous.

We trust that Mr. Cavendish Bentinck and his assistants will pursue their labours. When they reach the close of Elizabeth's reign the papers promise more direct information, and it will be of value to us to know how an intelligent foreigner was impressed by the events which led up to the great civil war.

MR. SYMONDS'S ESSAYS.

ESSAYS, SPECULATIVE AND ASSERTIVE. By John Addington Symonds. London: Chapman & Hall. 1890.

THE two volumes of essays which Mr. Symonds has just published are singularly interesting in themselves, as most thoughtful and suggestive discussions of topics which appeal strongly to every cultivated intellect. They are also specially interesting from the circumstances in which they were written. For twelve years, as Mr. Symonds tells us in his preface, he has been compelled by ill-health to forsake populous cities and the society of his intellectual equals, to renounce the ambitious aims and the active pursuits of life. In the isolation of his Alpine solitude, amid white snowdrifts and inhospitable mountains, and in the serious frame of mind induced by illness and the prospect of approaching death, he has watched the far-off world of thought, of circumstance, and of action. And in these pages he has set down some of the musings which have come to him regarding art and nature, regarding religion and man's relation to the universe. Favourable to grave meditation, indeed, are the conditions in which Mr. Symonds wrote. For most of us, the voices of men overpower the whisperings of the Infinite. Inspiration of any kind—artistic, philosophical, religious—is hardly given to those who are ever struggling in a throng. Some there are to whom Mr. Symonds in his still retreat—even with the malady which compelled him to take refuge there—is an object of envy. He has had time to think; to hold communion with nature, and with the Power revealed through nature. And certainly we owe him a debt of gratitude for admitting us to his meditations, for placing so frankly before us his speculative thoughts. Mr. Symonds's first essay deals with the Philosophy of Evolution. The author, however, recommends that it should be left unread until one or another of the articles which follow it has aroused curiosity about his views. In accordance with that counsel, we will briefly glance at the remaining contents of his volumes, and then return to this paper.

The topics with which Mr. Symonds deals are very varied, comprising as they do such themes as "Principles of Criticism," "The Provinces of the Several Arts," "The Relation of Art to Science and Morality," "Caricature," "Style," "Landscape." Nor are his essays bound together by any other ties than those of the writer's individuality of thought and strong æsthetic sense, which, however, to be sure, constitute a considerable *nexus*. Mr. Symonds is essentially a critic. But criticism, for him, is not mere dilettantism. "Criticism," he tells us, "is not caprice, not personal proclivity, not particular taste, but a steady comprehension of the whole." In default of any better rule of life he adopts Goethe's: "Im Ganzen, Guten, Schönen, resolut zu leben." How to grasp the whole, how to attain to "a point of view from which all manifestations should appear correlated, should fall into their proper places as parts of a complex organism"—that is the problem he fain would solve. The old religious creeds of mankind do not command Mr. Symonds's allegiance. Doubtless, he would say with Goethe that the man who has science and art has religion:—

"Wer Wissenschaft und Kunst besitzt,
Hat auch Religion;
Wer jene beiden nicht besitzt,
Der habe Religion."

But let us in this connection quote some words of Mr. Symonds's:—

"The mind, reflecting upon nature, and generalising the various suggestions of beauty which it has received from nature, becomes aware of an infinity which it can only grasp through thought and feeling, which shall never be fully revealed upon this earth, but which poetry and art bring nearer to our sensuous perceptions. Shelley, personifying this ideal vision, and addressing it as a goddess in his 'Hymn to Intellectual Beauty,' exclaims:—

'Man were immortal and omnipotent,
Didst thou, unknown and awful as thou art,
Keep with thy glorious train firm state within his heart.'

Wordsworth, in calmer and more humble language, hits his mark when speaking of 'the gleam, the light that never was on sea or land.' Plato thought of this when he explained how the mind ascends from the contemplation of beautiful objects to the vision of beauty in its essence; and when he suggested, under the form of an allegory, that the soul of man carries with it some remembrance of the archetypal loveliness beheld in previous stages of existence. It is the function of all true art to shed this gleam, this light, upon the things which have been conscientiously and lovingly observed in nature. It is the function of art to give the world a glimpse and foretaste of that universal beauty by selecting from natural objects their choicest qualities, and combining these in a harmony beyond the sphere of actual material things."—Vol. I., p. 217.

This is very true, and very finely said. And now we will go back to Mr. Symonds's first essay, the object of which is to show that "the philosophy of Evolution, instead of crushing the aspirations of humanity, and reducing our conceptions of the world to chaos, may be expected to reanimate religion and to restore spirituality to the universe." We have no fault to find with the terms of this proposition, although we should probably interpret it differently from Mr. Symonds. But from much which he advances in his endeavour to establish it we are compelled to dissent. For example, when Mr. Symonds describes a miracle as "a freak of power," he gives us a mere literary squib, altogether useless for the illumination of a grave discussion. Quite apart from all question as to the truth of the miraculous, does Mr. Symonds suppose that such an account of it would have been accepted by any serious writer from the time of St. Gregory the Great, who speaks of the ordinary operations of nature as "God's daily miracles," to the time of Kant, who defines miracles as "events in the world with the laws of whose operation we are, and always must be, unacquainted;" adding that "sensible people will always, in theory, admit their possibility." Or, again, when Mr. Symonds writes, "We are compelled by evolution to conceive of intelligence as the final outcome of vital processes which started from an inorganic basis," he certainly errs. We are not compelled by evolution to do anything of the kind. Evolution is, in strictness, a modal, not a causal theory; and, as Dr. Martineau has happily remarked, you will get just as much out of your vital processes by evolution as you put into them by hypothesis. Once more, after a very careful perusal of this essay of Mr. Symonds' we doubt much whether he has any true conception of the nature of intellect. With Mr. Spencer, he appears to regard it as a bundle of associations. Whereas it is, in fact, a power of perception and of judgment *sui generis*. Mr. Symonds, like the rest of us, is irresistibly impelled to philosophise, according to Aristotle's dictum, "It is not in a man's choice whether he will philosophise or no: philosophise he must." But Mr. Symonds the philosopher is of much less account than Mr. Symonds the critic.

GRAY AND HIS FRIENDS.

GRAY AND HIS FRIENDS: LETTERS AND RELICS IN GREAT PART HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED. Edited by Duncan C. Tovey, M.A. Cambridge: At the University Press. 1890.

THE author of the "Elegy wrote in a Country Churchyard," if anywhere he is still conscious of the fate of his little fardel of immortal verse, can scarcely complain of the attention which the last decade has devoted to him. In 1880 appeared, in Volume III. of Ward's "English Poets," that fine appreciation (as it would now be called) in which

Mr. Matthew Arnold, taking for his text a phrase used by the Master of Pembroke College, drove home, after his fashion, what he conceived to be the main lesson of Gray's cloistered and (relatively) unproductive life. In 1882 followed Mr. Gosse's memoir in the "Men of Letters" series—which, over and above its author's gifts of style and sympathy, had, in the fact that its material was exactly proportioned to its prescribed limitations, an advantage seldom enjoyed by the other contributors to the series. Not long afterwards came the same writer's four-volume edition of Gray's "Works," and to this, in May, 1885, succeeded the installation, in the very corner where Gray used to sit at Pembroke, and where he was seized with his last illness, of Mr. Hamo Thornycroft's admirable bust. Now again, after five years' further interval, comes Mr. Tovey, with a volume of final relics for the most part unpublished. From the MS. material in the British Museum collected by Gray's earlier editor, John Mitford, he has transcribed a number of letters by Gray, by Walpole, by West especially; and he has disinterred from the same source two notes to the poet from the Miss Speed of the "Long Story" (afterwards Madame de la Perrière), a lady who is supposed to have troubled the even tenor of Gray's life with its only approach to a *tendre*. From Mr. Chaloner Chute's recently published "History of the Vyne" (in Hampshire), he has borrowed some letters to the Mr. John Chute who was Gray's travelling companion on the Continent; and from the collection of Mr. John Morris, Gray's Journals in France, Italy, and Scotland. These, with some further dispersed extracts from Mitford and from Gray's commonplace books at Pembroke, make up the bulk of the book.

It is the function of much modern investigation to disturb rather than to confirm; and Mr. Tovey has not escaped this disadvantage. His inquiries have, it is true, enabled him to rectify a few minor errors which have escaped his predecessors, but as regards material points he can only discredit the evidence. He makes it fairly clear, for instance, that the "Tydeus" and "Almanzor" of Cunningham were certainly not Walpole and West. Yet, though we agree with him that the question is of little moment, he cannot tell us who they were. Again, though he devotes several pages of his "Introductory Essay" to a discussion of the Graio-Walpolean misunderstanding of 1741, he throws no additional light upon the subject, beyond obscurely connecting Ashton with the catastrophe. That Walpole opened a private letter of Gray, as was affirmed nearly sixty years after date by "Mr. Roberts of the Pell-office," is exceedingly improbable. But, indeed, this discussion, like the other, is scarcely worth the pains Mr. Tovey devotes to it. Whatever the proximate cause of the estrangement, Walpole's own explanation, as given to Pinkerton and Mason, should suffice for reasonable people. The friends had been too long together; they were at bottom of different tastes and habits; and their relations had become so strained that it needed but a trifle to snap the connection. Unless there must be a secret scandal in everything, there is nothing more to know. We like Mr. Tovey much better in the purely critical part of his work. We heartily coincide with him in thinking that far too much has been made of the allegation that Gray "never spoke out;" that his melancholy has been greatly exaggerated; that he was not, on the whole, an unhappy man; and that his was not the nature of which copious poets are made. It is as absurd to make the age responsible for his literary reticence as it is to charge it with Goldsmith's debts or Johnson's bearishness, and Mr. Tovey's sane and sensible utterances upon this head are especially pleasant to read.

Of the matter of "Gray and his Friends," despite its careful annotations and one's desire to give every welcome to genuine relics of the poet, it is difficult to speak with great enthusiasm. One of the new Gray letters—that recounting a conversation among his books—is characteristic and interesting; as is also

the second epistle from Miss Speed, an epistle so caressing in its amiable *enjouement* that we cannot but regret the extract in a foot-note which transforms her, at a later period, into a Frenchified baroness, with rouge and a cockatoo. West's premature death, his delicate academic talents, and his connection with Walpole and Gray, lend a gentle interest to his correspondence with its interspersed eighteenth-century paraphrases of the classics. But neither his matter nor his manner makes him equal as a letter-writer to Gray or Walpole, although he has touched that now and then remind one of both. As to Ashton, the last of the quartet, even Mr. Tovey himself appears to cherish no reverence for that gentleman. He was manifestly a rather pompous time-server (one of his letters to Walpole might have been written by Thackeray's Parson Sampson), and he is by a long way the least interesting figure in Gray's little circle.

TWO BOOKS OF AFRICAN TRAVEL.

THROUGH ABYSSINIA: AN ENVOY'S RIDE TO THE KING OF ZION. By F. Harrison Smith, R.N. London: T. Fisher Unwin. 1890.

TRAVELS IN AFRICA DURING THE YEARS 1875—1878. By Dr. Wilhelm Junker. Translated from the German by A. H. Keane, F.R.G.S. London: Chapman & Hall. 1890.

It would be difficult to imagine a greater contrast between two narratives of travel than is presented by those before us. Mr. Harrison Smith's narrative, from the time he left London till the date of his return, extends over only about five months, and he was not two months in Abyssinia altogether. He was commissioned in the end of 1885 to take a sword of honour to the late King John of Abyssinia. His book is mainly an itinerary, and as such it may be of service to any future traveller going by the same route. There is barely enough of solid matter in the book to form a readable magazine article, and though Mr. Smith, like most young authors, thinks it necessary to attempt to be funny, he is never amusing. Even a trained observer could hardly do much in a country like Abyssinia during a month or so of hurried travel; and would certainly not have had the presumption to write a book about his trip. Still we do not wish to discourage Mr. Smith. He is young. He may have many opportunities in the future of visiting little-known lands. Let him learn to use his eyes; let him take a few lessons in the art of observation; let him study the R. G. S.'s "Hints to Travellers," and he may in the future have a chance of writing a book of travel worth reading and worth keeping.

Dr. Junker's narrative of his three years' sojourn in the Egyptian Sudan, while it is a book to study and to keep for reference alongside the works of Barth, Nachtigal, and Schweinfurth, is one that is sure to interest every intelligent reader. It is brightly written, full of incident, rich in information about every feature of the interesting region with which it deals. It should be stated—the English edition does not give any indication of the fact—that this is only the first of a series of three or four volumes. Volume I. covers the first three of eleven years of exploration. During this time Dr. Junker saw much of Emin Pasha, and the two became fast friends. When the Mahdist rising reached Emin's Equatorial Provinces in 1884, Junker had hastily to withdraw to Lado. Ultimately he succeeded in reaching the coast through Unyoro, and on his way to Europe met Mr. Stanley at Cairo, and was able to give the leader of the Relief Expedition much useful information about Emin's position.

The present volume deals mainly with a comparatively limited area. Indeed, so far as extent of ground covered goes, Junker's journeys cannot be compared with those of Livingstone, Stanley, Thomson, and other pioneers. Junker belongs to what we may call the intensive school of explorers; a school which, now that so much of the pioneer work has been done, will be more and more in demand. The

aim of explorers like Junker is not to make a rush through the unknown—a task of great value and hazard—but to settle down in a region and make a thorough study of all its aspects. For exploring work of this class high qualifications are necessary. A man must be able not merely to use his sextant and boil his thermometer; he must know so much of botany, zoology, geology, as will enable him to recognise the leading classes of plants, animals, and rocks; he must know how to collect specimens; he must, above all, be able to distinguish the different types of humanity that inhabit his region, and to collect data and articles that will be useful to the anthropologist. All this Junker did, and hence the rich stores of information with which the volume abounds. Notwithstanding the serious losses of his collections of many years, owing to the incursions of the Mahdists, he has been able greatly to enrich the ethnological sections of the museums of St. Petersburg and Berlin. Though Dr. Junker is a German by descent, he was born in Moscow (1840), and is, we believe, a Russian subject.

The volume before us begins with an interesting account of an excursion to the Natron Lakes and the Fayyûm. From Cairo, Dr. Junker went over the Red Sea to Jiddah, and across to Suakin. Thence south through the Beni-Amer country, along the course of the Baraka, to Kasala, where he stayed a short time, and about which he has some interesting notes. From Kasala he went up the Atbara some distance, across country to the Bahr-el-Azrek, which he followed down to Khartûm. Junker reached Khartûm just a few days after the return of the Governor, Ismail Pasha Eyûb, from Dar-Fôr, where he had been for about two years completing the conquest of that Mohammedan negro State on behalf of Egypt. The conquest had really been effected by the notorious Zibêr, of whom Dr. Junker saw a good deal, and of whom he formed the lowest opinion. Indeed, during his many years' sojourn in the Upper Nile country he had frequent opportunities of meeting with the representatives of the Egyptian Government. He was often compelled to accompany their expeditions for the conquest or the punishment of the people whom Egypt desired to annex, and his verdict is that there were few of them who were not scoundrels of the worst type. Even those native chiefs who were friendly and loyal to Egypt, frequently complained to Junker of the cruelties and exactions of her officials. While ostensibly suppressing the slave trade, they themselves were the greatest dealers in the human commodity, and did not hesitate to enrich themselves by it. It was no wonder that when the Mahdi appeared he was received with open arms by the natives, who were only too glad to get rid of the Egyptians; and no wonder that in the end Gordon himself left the province in despair of accomplishing any reform. Khartûm, of which Dr. Junker gives a detailed description, was only founded in 1823; the favourable strategical and commercial position of the site, at the confluence of the two Niles, attracting the attention of the Egyptian authorities, then pushing their way southwards. In a short time it became the chief emporium for the whole of North-east Africa. Before its capture by the Mahdi, Khartûm had a population of 70,000. Junker made many friends in the town, and during his somewhat long stay saw much of the various phases of the life of the place; his descriptions are full of interest.

But Khartûm was only a stage on Junker's journey, and, after an excursion to Sennaar and the Sobat, he set out for Lado. But before starting, Gordon arrived from the south, and Junker soon made friends with him. Gordon sent injunctions to all his officials in the Equatorial Province to render Junker every assistance. Junker himself travelled in very simple fashion. His caravan was small; often he had only one or two natives with him. He always made friends with the natives, and never during all his travels fired a hostile shot. At Lado Junker made the acquaintance of Emin, who at that

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time was serving under Gordon, and who of course rendered his fellow-naturalist every assistance. Lado forms the base of Junker's operations during the latter half of the present volume. As we have said, his journeys were mostly made in the company of military expeditions, and the cruelties he had to witness must have detracted greatly from the pleasure he had in exploring new countries and collecting specimens. Wholesale slaughter, the burning of villages, the destruction of crops, the carrying off of women and children as slaves, were ordinary incidents when these expeditions reached their destinations. The programme would no doubt be repeated if Egypt were allowed to have a footing in these regions again. The journeys described by Junker in this volume extend westwards as far as the Baginse Mountains, and from the Bahr-el-Ghazal in the north to near Wadelai in the south. This country was traversed in many directions, so that Dr. Junker is able to supplement in many important respects the information obtained by Schweinfurth. It is a country of low hills, rivers, and swamps, capable, under a settled Government, of considerable agricultural development. One of the most interesting peoples in the country are the Makaraka, who are intruders from the west, whence they have been driven by pressure from other tribes. But the population is very varied in type, and Dr. Junker's descriptions of the mode of life of the various tribes among whom he sojourned, their belongings, their superstitions, their physique, will be valued by the ethnologist, and will greatly interest the ordinary reader. The numerous excellent illustrations are, without exception, appropriate to the text.

THREE NOVELS.

1. *THE HOUSE ON THE SCAR: A TALE OF SOUTH DEVON.* By Bertha Thomas. London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington. 1890.
2. *PASSION THE PLAYTHING.* By R. Murray Gilchrist. London: William Heinemann. 1890.
3. *HEIR AND NO HEIR.* By the Hon. Albert S. G. Canning. London: Eden Remington & Co. 1890.

CUSTOM has given its sanction to certain improbabilities in fiction. In this practical world the delusions produced by ventriloquism or the assumption of a disguise are less complete than in the imaginary world of the novelist; and the conditions under which such delusions are at all possible are more limited. We have known the detective of fiction to do wonderful things by simply assuming a pair of dark blue spectacles and turning up his coat collar; and we have known the detective of real life fail to do the simplest things with a more perfect equipment. In "The House on the Scar" we think that the author asks too much. David Ferrier, an artist, had good reasons to suspect the character of George Elliston. He was particularly interested in him, because Elliston had married the girl with whom David was in love. So David disguised himself as a seaman, and obtained employment on Elliston's yacht; he went out in a boat with Elliston and his wife, was brought close to them and spoke to them, and was not discovered; he was upset out of the boat, and his make-up apparently was never injured. Even the detective of fiction cannot do quite as well as this.

There are many other improbabilities in this story, but it is not an uninteresting book. It is full of incident; it contains a most admirable villain; and the hero is less conventional and has a more distinct individuality than some of the other characters. Some of the scenes are striking and dramatic. It is not, on the whole, well written. The construction of some of the sentences is so clumsy as to render them not easily intelligible. The book may be popular enough with those who like an exciting story, can forgive improbabilities, and do not care one straw about literary merit. In other words, it may be popular with most English novel-readers.

It would be interesting to conjecture, if it were

possible, the state of mind which is requisite to produce such a book as "Passion the Plaything." Its hero, when on the verge of suicide, is saved by a man with whose sister he falls in love. She accepts him with some enthusiasm; agrees, for no very obvious reason, that he shall go away for a year and not write to her; and promptly marries the Earl of Westbrook, whom she does not love. She meditates suicide, receives a volume of poems which the hero has written, and makes an appointment with him in a cheerful spot called the Hell Garden. It is there for the first time that he learns of her disloyalty to him and her marriage with the earl. He goes on to the house, and after a most extraordinary scene with her, he is dismissed. Then she goes more than usually mad, and drowns herself. He becomes a philanthropist and a great poet: "on his thin, worn face there always rests a look of ineffable longing, and in his voice sadness is idealised." The book is wild and morbid in the extreme; it is essentially unhealthy. The atmosphere of its pages is a miasma from which we are glad to escape. In the struggle to avoid conventionality the author frequently becomes affected, absurd, and grotesque. The story aims at pathos, and lapses into the most nauseous sentimentality. It is a book which never ought to have been written.

We would not be unjust. We do not deny for one moment that the author possesses talent of an unusual kind, if not in an unusual degree. There are descriptive passages in the book which are really good. Beneath all the crudity and affectations and amateurishness this talent may be constantly traced. But it is not enough to be vivid, graphic, and imaginative. Strength, self-restraint, spontaneity, even the sense of humour, seem to be wanting in these pages. It is rarely safe to say absolutely that a book shows no promise. With a better choice of subject, and under more healthy and vigorous influences than those which have led to the sickly production before us, we might expect something from the author of "Passion the Plaything."

Probably few novelists are better qualified than the Hon. Albert S. G. Canning to write a story dealing with Ireland in 1798; but, although "Heir and No Heir" has a political interest, the interest is not chiefly political. It is the story of the popular son of an Irish landlord, who is disinherited by his father. Extravagance, post-obits, and an imprudent marriage, lead to the disinheritance. In spite of all his faults, there is much that is amiable in the son's character, and his misfortunes win the reader's sympathies. His wife, Natalie Laroche, had married him as a speculation, and was considerably disappointed to find that he would be a poor man. So was her mother, Madame Laroche, who also was a business-like woman. An Italian was very much in love with Natalie, and at the end of the book she is free to marry him. It would be unfair to the story to say how she gets free, or whether or not she marries the Italian. There is some good character-drawing in this story. Especially strong is the delineation of Natalie's brother, Émile, a puny person with a very fair capacity for hatred. The chief faults are the introduction of too many characters and of too much political discussion. The stage is frequently too crowded; and although some of the supernumeraries are excellently drawn, they take our attention away from the main thread of the story, with which they have nothing to do. Many readers will be discontented with the conclusion; and we own that the author distributes or withholds the punishments and rewards very much as they are distributed or withheld in real life.

On the whole, "Heir and No Heir" is well written and interesting. The author is able to use materials which are by no means at the disposal of every novelist. We are taken for once a little out of the groove, if not above the groove, of the average novel. For which we are much obliged to Mr. Canning.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.*

IN "Surnames and Place-names of the Isle of Man," Mr. Moore—a well-known Manx scholar—gives the reader the benefit of his researches in an outlying region of the science of philology. He reminds us that the history of the Isle of Man falls naturally into three periods. Originally the island was inhabited exclusively by a Celtic people; then followed the Viking invasions and the establishment of Scandinavian rule, and this in turn gave place to the epoch of English dominion, when the island became open to immigration from Great Britain. Mr. Moore says that the Celtic influence, though weakened by Norse incursions did not entirely cease until association with England was finally established under the sway of the Stanleys. Indeed, so firmly were they interwoven with the life of the people that the majority of the inhabitants of the Isle of Man still spoke their native Celtic tongue until the close of the eighteenth century. Mr. Moore seeks by an appeal to ancient documentary evidence to determine the etymology of the personal nomenclature of the Isle of Man, as well as to indicate the districts in which particular names appear to have had their origin. Broadly speaking, surnames of Irish derivation form the largest class, though the Scandinavian invasion is represented by a considerable number of surnames of Danish and Norwegian source. In nearly every case, however, these Scandinavian names have "undergone the kind of phonetic corruption which was inevitable when they had to pass through Celtic-speaking lips." Out of some hundred and seventy surnames which prevailed in the Isle of Man at the beginning of the present century, sixty-five per cent. were of Celtic origin, whilst upwards of seventeen per cent. could be traced, more or less directly, to the Vikings. An analysis of the place-names of the Isle of Man reveals the fact that out of, in round numbers, fifteen hundred names in use in the present day, sixty-eight per cent. are purely Celtic, nine per cent. are purely Scandinavian, while about six per cent. are of mixed Celtic and Scandinavian origin.

A new and revised edition has just appeared of Mr. Baring Gould's "Yorkshire Oddities," a book which is the outcome of a residence of many years in Yorkshire and an "inveterate habit of collecting all kinds of odd and out-of-the-way information concerning men and manners." Narratives of startling deeds and pen-and-ink portraits of eccentric people, with a few old traditions, weird and romantic, by turns make up the contents of a volume of four hundred pages of undeniable interest. Amongst the oddities who figure in the book are a witch, a prophet, a hermit, the madman who set fire to York Minster, and other local celebrities of more or less enviable renown. They all speak and act in a very unconventional fashion in Mr. Baring Gould's picturesque and often amusing record.

This is an age of cheap books, but we were not aware until yesterday that it was possible to purchase a "Tourist Guide to the Continent" for the modest sum of sixpence. If there is something to be said for such a book, there is quite as much to be said against it. First of all, the title is misleading, for Europe—even in the eyes of the youngest or most backward schoolboy—has not yet been shorn of Spain and Portugal, to say nothing of Italy or Russia. People, however, who want at a nominal price, as a companion on their travels, a chatty little book about Holland and Belgium, the Rhine, or the Swiss Lakes, will do well to take Mr. Lindley's volume with them—at the same time, they must not expect great things from it, or they will assuredly be disappointed. Moreover, we still protest that the title of the book should be altered, and most people, we imagine, would gladly dispense also with Mr. Lindley's airy literary allusions and snatches of borrowed poetry for a few additional facts of an explicit kind.

The latest achievement of that energetic young man, Mr. Thomas Stevens, known to fame as the author of "Around the World on a Bicycle," was a journey of six adventurous months in Masai-Land and the Kilimanjaro Country, East Africa, "Scouting for Stanley." Mr. Stevens sailed from New York in January, 1889, as the representative of a New York journal, to search for Stanley, and to organise an expedition, if on his arrival at Zanzibar that seemed necessary, for the explorer's rescue or relief. Stanley, however, as all the world now knows, proved quite able to look after himself, but such a fact does not detract one whit from the pluck and promptitude with which Mr. Stevens carried out his commission. In this lively

book he describes the march of his expedition to Taveta, his visit to Machame, the largest and most populous of the Kilimanjaro states, and his adventures, sometimes amusing, and often hazardous, as he pushed his way through Masai-Land. After an almost neck-and-neck race with another enterprising newspaper correspondent, Mr. Stevens duly "gratified," to borrow his own words, "a pardonable journalistic ambition in being the first correspondent to reach Stanley at Mswa and to give him the news of the world after his long period of African darkness." The book is crisply written, and as Mr. Stevens has had the sense to compress the narrative well within three hundred pages, the interest of this record of an adventurous journey is well maintained. There are a number of capital illustrations in the book, and a portrait of the author.

Mr. Jacobi, of the Chiswick Press, is a well-known authority on all that relates to the art of typography, and in the volume on "Printing" he has written a practical treatise of more than common value. It is notorious that many journeyman printers, as well as apprentices, work almost exclusively by rule of thumb, and know next to nothing of the principles which are involved in their calling. The use of mechanical processes, and the subdivision of labour which has followed in the wake of such inventions, is probably responsible for the diminished interest which many journeyman printers take in their daily work. Mr. Jacobi contends that technical classes and practical manuals are needed, so that the young compositor may fit himself for efficiency in the more difficult and delicate branches of a still progressive art. Great stress is laid in this volume on details connected with different departments of book-printing; and the mysteries of composition, display, colour-work, stereotyping, etc., are explained as far as that is possible in a volume of three hundred pages. The different kinds of printing-machines, both cylinder and rotary, are described; and technical terms and phrases are rendered clear to the uninitiated by a full glossary. This is a thorough, concise, and intelligible handbook, written with obvious mastery of all the details of the subject, and by a man who is sensible enough to confess that when all is said and done by means of technical hand-books and classes, experience must still remain the best teacher.

Ever since the days of George Canning, "Bobus" Smith, and Hookham Frere, Eton lads, or at all events a section of them, have been full of literary ambition, and this has manifested itself by an outbreak of *cacoethes scribendi* of a more or less alarming kind. The latest example of this pardonable weakness has just reached us in the shape of a dainty volume for which the editors of the *Parachute* and *Present Etonian*—two organs of school opinion—are responsible. The book, which is entitled "Seven Summers: an Eton Medley," is, of course, provided with the inevitable prologue and epilogue dear to youthful hearts. In quite a dutiful spirit, the volume is dedicated to a certain tutor who remains nameless, who "first sowed in our breast the fatal ambition to perpetuate our thoughts in black and white"—here we skip five lines—"in the hope that he may regard it as a folly rather than as a crime, finding nothing therein to grieve him, and somewhat to amuse." There are a dozen sketches of various phases of Eton life, and the book is avowedly an attempt to portray the "inner workings of the Etonian's mind," but we are bound to say that it is more successful as a description of the outer workings of the Etonian's body, especially in following the hounds across country, or playing practical jokes in which the fun was obvious enough to everybody but the victim. The opinion is expressed by the youthful authors of this lively, if somewhat callow little book, that nowhere on this earth is it easier for a healthy boy to lead a healthy life than at Eton, and we, at least, are not prepared to dispute the statement.

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* THE SURNAMES AND PLACE-NAMES OF THE ISLE OF MAN. By A. W. Moore, M.A. Introduction by Professor Rhys. London: Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row, E.C. Demy 8vo.

YORKSHIRE ODDITIES, INCIDENTS, AND STRANGE EVENTS. By S. Baring Gould, M.A. New Edition. London: Methuen and Co. Crown 8vo.

THE TOURIST GUIDE TO THE CONTINENT. Edited by Percy Lindley. Illustrated. New Edition. London: 125, Fleet Street, E.C. 12mo. (6d.)

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SEVEN SUMMERS: AN ETON MEDLEY. By the Editors of *Parachute* and *Present Etonian*. Eton: R. Ingaltton Drake. London: Simpkin Marshall & Co. Crown 8vo.

THE SPEAKER

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9, 1890.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

THE end of the moribund Session has drawn very near. Most of the leading members of the Opposition have left London, and the week has been spent in steady application to business in the House of Commons, varied with some explosions of feeling caused by the singular lack of tact shown by Ministers. We have had much talk about "Obstruction" from the Tory benches and the Tory press, but no real obstruction in the House. True, certain specimens of the Parliamentary bore have, as is their wont, made themselves specially obnoxious in these last languid days of Parliamentary strife; but the bores have been with us always. They were familiar figures in the House of Commons long before Parliamentary obstruction had been heard of, and their individual eccentricities cannot for a moment be charged against any political party. The Government have continued to drop Bills, and at the same time have been singularly successful in rousing the angriest spirit of indignation among the Scotch members by a course of action which is almost unintelligible.

LORD SALISBURY made a jubilant speech on foreign affairs at the Mansion House on Wednesday evening. If we are to believe him everything is *coulour de rose* abroad, and the peace of Europe is assured. We have unhappily learnt the precise value of assurances of this kind from the lips of Foreign Ministers. It may be granted, however, that for the present the state of Europe is distinctly pacific. The visit of the German Emperor to the Queen adds fresh evidence to the reality of the good understanding which has now been established between the two countries, and of which the cession of Heligoland is the sign and symbol. It is an understanding for which we have had to pay heavily, and there is nothing in it of which we can boast; but at least it will be something if we secure the friendship of Germany. Nor is this all. On the day on which LORD SALISBURY spoke, the terms of the agreement we have made with France for the purpose of securing her recognition of the Protectorate of Zanzibar were made known. Here again we have had to pay heavily. Madagascar, the scene of the noblest missionary triumphs of England during the present century, has been abandoned to France, and the Republic has at the same time obtained the right to the "back-land" of Africa from Tunis to the Niger. The French are delighted—naturally. LORD SALISBURY may be perfectly right in saying that our relations with France and Germany are excellent. So long as we purchase friendship at this price, it may always be obtained. But what a price it is! And what a commentary is afforded by these transactions upon the ultra-jingoism of the present Prime Minister when in Opposition!

DESPITE the assertions of LORD SALISBURY there is one spot on the European horizon where the outlook is anything but bright. We refer to Russia. Though strenuous denials have been offered regarding the alleged persecution of the Jews, it is to be feared that the facts are pretty much as they were stated last week. Public opinion in England has been strongly moved by the revelation of this policy. We cannot believe that the utterances of the Press

are due, as our contemporary *Truth* declares, merely to the fact that Jews are proprietors of some English journals; nor do we see that it can answer any good purpose to set the Turkish atrocities in Armenia against the persecution of the Jews in Russia. The Czar is a Christian ruler who sins against the light. Regarding the Turk, all minds are made up, and we await his inevitable doom with equanimity. It is not only by the persecution of the Jews, however, that ALEXANDER THE THIRD is showing his hatred of freedom. The recent withdrawal from Finland of its cherished local liberties is another retrograde step. The Czar, we are told, has been punished for it by finding that he and his family have suddenly lost all the popularity they have hitherto enjoyed when sojourning among the Finns. In the meantime there are fresh rumours of plots against His Majesty's life, and the materials for a great conflagration throughout the Russian Empire are steadily being accumulated.

THE most recent explanations of Ministers prove beyond the possibility of doubt or controversy that the Anglo-German agreement is a retrograde agreement, so far as the policy of Free Trade is concerned. By Article VII. of the Commercial Treaty of 1886 it was provided that a duty not exceeding 5 per cent. was to be paid at that port in the dominions of the SULTAN OF ZANZIBAR where the goods are first landed, but that on payment of this duty such goods were thereafter to be exempt, within the Zanzibar dominions, from all other customs duties or taxes levied by or on behalf of the Government of His Highness the Sultan. The Anglo-German agreement changes all this. In the event of the mainland portion of the Sultanate of Zanzibar being ceded to Germany, goods which have paid the 5 per cent. duty on entering the island will be liable to pay another 5 per cent. duty on entering the mainland. Again, by Article I. of the General Act of the Conference of Berlin (1885), the Conference Powers agreed to use their good offices with the Governments established on the African shore of the Indian Ocean for the purpose of obtaining their approval to the establishment of complete Free Trade within their respective territories; but it is now admitted that the Conference Powers have hitherto failed to use their good offices in the sense indicated, and that they have not the remotest intention in the world of so using them in the future. The commercial and industrial classes in this country are not likely to bless the Government that negotiated the Anglo-German agreement.

NOR does the agreement by any means appear to have given unqualified satisfaction at the Cape. On the motion of the HON. CECIL RHODES, the Cape Colony House of Assembly has unanimously passed a resolution regretting that the Cape Government was not consulted with regard to the Anglo-German agreement, as far as it concerned the territory south of the Zambesi. It will be remembered that more than a month ago MR. SMITH was asked in the House of Commons whether any communications had taken place between the Home Government and the Government of the Cape Colony with reference to the proposed Anglo-German agreement. He stated in reply that some communications had taken place, but that they were of a confidential character, the effect of which it would not

be desirable to state, as negotiations were going on. Upon this point MR. SMITH and the HON. CECIL RHODES appear to be in direct conflict with each other, and, strange as it may appear, SIR JAMES FERGUSSON, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, has taken sides with the Prime Minister at the Cape against his own leader in the House of Commons. "The Cape Government," says SIR JAMES FERGUSSON, "was not a party to the negotiations, its territories were not affected by the agreement, and the general provisions were not laid before it previously to the conclusion of the agreement." We venture to think, in direct opposition to the contention of our own Foreign Office, that the Cape Colony is most deeply interested in the provisions of the Anglo-German agreement, and that the time has long since gone by when it was either just or expedient that the Home Government should make arrangements closely affecting any of our Colonies without first taking those Colonies into its confidence.

THE House of Lords has again displayed its extraordinary unwisdom during the week. LORD HOUGHTON'S Committee had dealt in a fair and reasonable spirit with the Bill promoted by the London County Council, one of the objects of which was to provide for the removal of the DUKE OF BEDFORD'S gates and bars on his Bloomsbury estate. The question of compensation had been fully considered, and the Lords Committee, like the Commons, had decided that no compensation for removal was due to the tenants. Then, at the last moment on Tuesday, LORD WEMYSS and the other representatives of the Liberty and Property Defence Association rushed into the breach and carried a clause which embodied the principle of compensation—to the DUKE OF BEDFORD! The tenants whose peace—secured at so much inconvenience to the general public—is to be disturbed, are to receive no compensation; but the DUKE OF BEDFORD, the typical ground-landlord of London, whose wealth grows whilst he sleeps, and who would not lose so much as one night's rest by the removal of every bar and gate in the metropolis, is to have the power of claiming compensation just as though land of his had been taken from him. The enemies of the House of Lords ought to be very grateful to the Peers who on Tuesday last thus played into their hands.

THE execution of KEMMLER, the American murderer, by means of electricity, has been made the occasion of a very painful display of that form of hysteria which now-a-days afflicts a public debauched by "sensational" journalism. For months past KEMMLER'S approaching fate has been discussed in the American newspapers as eagerly as though the destiny of nations depended upon it. At last the day of his execution arrived, and he was duly put to death in the presence of more than a score of witnesses who had been fed beforehand on the sensational diet of the press. His death was certainly painless, and probably instantaneous, but the over-wrought nerves of the spectators led them to imagine all kinds of horrors in connection with it. Probably few of them had ever seen a man hanged, or knew the horrors connected with that form of killing. As it is, the full and inevitably unpleasant details of the death-scene have been spread not only throughout America, but even in this country (the *Standard* published a description on Thursday morning two columns in length!), and the result is a demand that there shall be no more executions by electricity. Would it not be simpler and more manly to decide that there shall be no more executions under any circumstances? The violent slaying of a human being cannot possibly be made a pleasant spectacle for the onlookers.

THE crisis in the Argentine Republic has been solved after much difficulty and delay by the resignation of the Presidency by DR. CELMAN, his place

being taken by MR. PELLEGRINI. The change is distinctly one for the better, DR. CELMAN'S Administration having been responsible for the grave financial and political complications which have brought the State so near to ruin. MR. PELLEGRINI bears an excellent character, and though he cannot restore the damaged reputation of the Argentine Republic in a month, he may be able to steer the ship safely through the storm in which it has been caught. Of the ultimate prosperity of the State, provided it enjoys good government, none can doubt.

THE Swaziland agreement between the English Government and the Transvaal has been under discussion during the week, but it has not yet been definitely concluded. The Boers, it is evident from the telegrams received since the publication of the arrangements on Monday, are by no means pleased with the terms agreed upon. Those terms were essentially in the nature of a compromise. Swaziland, instead of being acquired either by the Transvaal or England, is to remain independent, under a joint Government of Englishmen and Boers, whilst the Transvaal obtains the right to construct a railway across Swaziland and Amatongaland to the port of Kosi, which will belong exclusively to the Republic. Until we know whether the treaty is actually accepted by the Transvaal, it is useless to discuss its provisions. If, however, it is accepted by the Boers, they will show greater moderation than they have hitherto exhibited in their dealings with us.

THE rate of discount in the open market has declined this week. It was thought that gold was coming in such large amounts from New York, and is likely to be received from Paris, that bill-brokers and discount houses competed eagerly with one another, and foreign bankers also freely took English bills. On Thursday, however, there was a change in the feeling of the market. The value of money in New York suddenly rose, causing a stoppage of the gold exports, and the directors of the Bank of France charged a premium of as much as 4s. 2d. per mille for gold. Therefore, the probability which seemed so great previously, of getting enough of gold to replenish the Bank of England's reserve, was all at once lessened. At the same time, it is known that gold will be sent abroad in considerable amounts. And lastly, trade is so active, and harvesting is now becoming so general, that coin is flowing out to the provinces in large amounts.

THERE is a decidedly better feeling in the Stock Markets this week, though business is little more active. In the first place, operators hope that the stringency in the Money Markets is over for a while at all events. And in the second, they have been persuading themselves that the crisis in the Argentine Republic will be ended by the resignation of PRESIDENT CELMAN, and the installation of a successor who has the confidence of the public at home and abroad. That, of course, is a delusion. A change of government does not replace the losses that have been incurred by speculators, nor reduce an excessive currency, nor lessen the burden of debt. But operators are sanguine, and Argentine securities have risen. Then, again, the weather has at length become favourable for harvesting. And, lastly, trade continues exceedingly good. The railway traffic returns are most satisfactory, and all other evidence goes to show that trade is better now even than it was last year. But in spite of so much that is favourable, there is exceedingly little doing upon the Stock Exchange. The prospectus is issued of MESSRS. J. & P. COATS (Limited), of the Ferguslie Thread Works, Paisley. The share capital will be £1,333,340 in 6 per cent. preference shares of £10 each; £1,666,670 in ordinary shares of £10 each, and there will be in addition £1,333,340 in 4½ per cent. debenture stock.

MR. GLADSTONE.

MR. GLADSTONE has gone home to Hawarden, and with his departure from London the whole political atmosphere seems to have undergone a change. No matter who remains—a Prime Minister, a Chancellor of the Exchequer, or an Irish Secretary, all men of mark and distinction in their way—the interest of the public in the political struggle seems to have died at the moment of the Liberal leader's departure. It is extraordinary, this position of one man, and one man alone, in the great world of politics; and it is unique. There are those who resent so strongly any allusion to Mr. Gladstone's abnormal physical and intellectual vigour that, in order to avoid causing them irritation, we hardly dare dwell upon the fact of his age. He was in Parliament before most of his rivals were in their cradles, and a power in the land before the name of any one of them had been heard outside the schoolroom. All this we know, and we have wondered now for so considerable a number of years over the fact—for a fact it has been for years past—that we have almost ceased to have the power of wondering any more. Indeed, Mr. Gladstone himself prevents us from allowing him one, at least, of the compensations of old age—pity for its loneliness. There is no loneliness about him, just as there is no cessation of the power of learning; or, in other words, of mental growth. True, he has been called upon to part with nearly all the friends and companions who stood by his side “in life's morning march.” Brought up under the shadow of the great name of Canning, the subordinate of Peel, the friend or colleague in the past of Lord John Russell, of Sidney Herbert, of Sir James Graham, of Lord Aberdeen, of Lord Palmerston, of the Duke of Newcastle, of Sir George Lewis, of Mr. Cobden, of Mr. Bright, and of a whole host of illustrious Englishmen whose names have passed into history, it might well be thought that he must now feel himself standing alone in the place which was once peopled by so many of his contemporaries. The other day a statue was unveiled on the Thames Embankment which is meant to perpetuate the memory of a great Englishman who has been dead these four years, and whose twenty-five years of Parliamentary life won for him a lasting claim upon the gratitude of his fellow-countrymen. Yet when Mr. Forster entered Parliament, an unknown and untried man, Mr. Gladstone was already on the threshold of the Premiership. To have seen so many colleagues, trusted and loved, fall by his side, can be no common sorrow to any man, and least of all to a man of Mr. Gladstone's ardent and sympathetic temperament. Yet whilst his heart still clings to the memories of the past, it is open to the impressions of the present; and there has been no period in his long life when Mr. Gladstone has been surrounded by a band of friends more loyal and more devoted than those who now stand by the veteran's side in eager expectation of his next and greatest battle for the cause of justice and freedom. Most men of eighty have withdrawn from the fight, and live alone with their memories. In Mr. Gladstone's case memory and hope and effort dwell side by side.

He has gone home, bringing his sheaves with him. Much has happened since he came up to town last February, and took up his abode in the house in St. James's Square which during the Session has been the real headquarters of English Liberalism. For Mr. Gladstone personally, the last six months have been a term of unremitting social and intellectual activity. He has entertained many guests in his own house; he has charmed and fascinated uncounted dinner parties, including not a few composed of his political opponents, in the houses of

others; he has spoken many times in the House of Commons and out of it; he has found time to contribute to several magazines and reviews—one at least of his contributions, the delightful sketch of Dr. Döllinger published in these pages, being one of the very happiest of the numberless products of his pen; he has been to Oxford, playing the part of a student in the venerable halls which he quitted sixty years ago, and evoking the enthusiasm of the youthful scholars of to-day as he invoked that of their fathers before them. It has been a full year for Mr. Gladstone at all events—as full of work, of enjoyment, of effort, and of sympathy, as any year he has ever known. Nor has the work been fruitless. When Parliament met, the Liberal leader found himself confronted by a great party which was still dressed in the arrogance of its superior strength. The cause of Home Rule still lay under a social ban; there were still men who believed that the rope of sand Mr. Balfour was spinning so laboriously was destined to hold fast; above all, there was still confidence in the future fortunes of the Tory and Liberal Unionist coalition among the great body of its followers throughout the country. We need hardly dwell upon the change which has passed over the scene since then, the change which has happened whilst Mr. Gladstone has been directing his party during the present Session. Ministers have fallen so low that absolute defeat itself could hardly bring them lower. Mr. Balfour's impossible policy is now recognised as being impossible by every intelligent man on the Tory benches; the first serious signs of a rift in the union of the two sections of Ministerialists have come to light, whilst the evidence of the bye-elections has still further strengthened the universal conviction that the flowing tide, in ever-increasing force and volume, is with the Liberal leader. Nor is this all. “Society,” which so long assumed that every follower of Mr. Gladstone must of necessity be a child of darkness, and which accompanied its denunciations of boycotting in Ireland by practising boycotting in Belgravia, has tardily discovered that after all a man may believe in granting the Irish people a reasonable measure of self-government without being of necessity given over to perdition. So even “the classes” have relaxed their bitter and pronounced hostility to the Home Ruler, and—perhaps with an eye to the next General Election and after—have once more consented to smile upon him as a man presumably not less honest or patriotic than his neighbours.

All this Mr. Gladstone has seen during the past six months; and in all this, it may with truth be said, he has had the leading part. For this he laboured during four dark years of unfriendly fortune, and for this end during the present year he has put forth, without stint or grudge, every particle of strength remaining to him. How often since 1876 have we been told—and not by our enemies alone—that Home Rule was dead; that the constituencies were tired of the eternal Irish Question; that if ever the Liberal party was to regain the confidence of the country it must find a new issue on which to fight, a new flag under which to serve? But at the darkest moment Mr. Gladstone never wavered, never lost heart or hope; and, despite the ridicule of a thousand scornful antagonists, persisted in stating and restating, again and again, with ever-increasing clearness and emphasis, the conditions of the great moral and political problem which stands first for solution among the many problems which await the attention of our statesmen. Who now ventures to affirm that Home Rule is dead, or that Mr. Gladstone merely beats the air when discussing the old question of Ireland? Never since Parliament was reformed has a more important or more

significant election taken place than that at Barrow. It taught even the dullest of observers that above and before all other questions still looms that Irish problem—the sphinx whose riddle must be answered before we can go our way in peace. This is the triumph of Mr. Gladstone. It is for this that he has been labouring with untiring devotion during the past four years, and it is this which he has seen accomplished during the six months' residence in London which has just come to an end. That it is the prelude to the more momentous triumph of the ballot-boxes everybody knows and most admit; and that the Liberal leader may be spared to see this triumph also is the prayer of millions of enthusiastic followers, as well as of every generous foe.

MALTA AND THE VATICAN.

SIR LINTORN SIMMONS'S mission to the Pope is a very serious business indeed, and it is natural that Mr. Chamberlain and that pseudo-Liberal henchman of a Tory Government, Mr. T. W. Russell, should trail a red herring across the path of the discussion in the hope of sending the public astray on a wrong scent. Sir George Errington's parleying with the Pope bears as much relation to Sir Lintorn Simmons's accredited mission as Macedon does to Monmouth, because "there is a river in each, and there is salmons in both." Sir Lintorn Simmons had some conversations with the Pope on behalf of the British Government; so had Sir George Errington. There the resemblance begins and ends. Sir George Errington is an amiable Roman Catholic gentleman who asked for and received a letter from Lord Granville to say that the British Government would be glad that so respectable a member for an Irish constituency should unofficially and in a friendly way put the Pope in possession of the true state of affairs in Ireland, and of the views of Her Majesty's Government thereon. Mr. Errington, as he then was, may have magnified his office, and given himself diplomatic airs which led people at the Vatican, to draw inferences which certainly the facts do not justify. This, at least, is the only deduction from a somewhat extraordinary telegram in the *Times* of last Tuesday from its Roman correspondent. "If Sir George Errington," says the correspondent, "was not authorised to prepare the ground for the establishment of diplomatic relations on a permanent footing between England and the Vatican, there are many people in Rome who have been sadly deluded."

Very possibly; but we are confident, nevertheless, that Sir George Errington was not authorised to prepare the ground for anything of the sort. That, however, is a matter of minor importance. If the question turned solely on the expediency or in expediency of reviving diplomatic relations with the Vatican we should not think it worth while to waste our space in discussing it. Whether Sir George Errington had or had not a diplomatic mission to the Pope is a matter of comparative insignificance. The question we have to face is not the official status of two respectable gentlemen, but the subject-matter of their negotiations. It is absolutely certain that Sir George Errington had no authority to alter by a hair's breadth the legal position of a single subject of Queen Victoria. Sir Lintorn Simmons, on the other hand, was authorised to make a sort of treaty with the Pope, which seriously affects the rights and privileges of a considerable number of British subjects. Sir George Errington, therefore, may be dismissed into space, for his volunteered and unofficial parleyings with the Vatican have no bearing at all on the question in debate. Sir Lintorn

Simmons was sent to the Vatican on a Special Mission as Her Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, and the main object of his mission was to come to an arrangement with the Pope on the subject of marriage in the islands of Malta and Gozo. Here are the Pope's terms, and Her Majesty's Plenipotentiary was authorised to commit the British Government to "a Project of Law" in accordance with them:—

"1. That marriages celebrated in Malta by all those who profess the Catholic religion, whether both contracting parties be Catholics, or whether one of them be a Catholic and the other a non-Catholic, are not and shall not be valid, if they are not celebrated according to the form established by the Council of Trent.

"2. That persons professing any other religion may validly celebrate their marriage without the necessity of going through the form established by the Council of Trent.

"Legislation which Her Britannic Majesty's Government may enact for Malta with the view to regulating the civil effect of marriages celebrated heretofore, or which will in future be celebrated therein, in accordance with these declarations, will not meet with any opposition on the part of the Holy See."

Let the British public understand what this means. It means that for the first time since the Reformation—we may almost say since the ignominious surrender of King John—the Sovereign of these realms has surrendered to the Pope, through her constitutional advisers, the supremacy of the British Crown in Malta. It is no longer the Queen who reigns supreme in Malta in one of the most vital departments of religious and civil life, but the Pope of Rome. It is he who now decides who are validly married and who are not; in other words, who are the legitimate inheritors of privileges and property. All marriages between Roman Catholics and others are now declared not only to be invalid in the future, but to have been invalid in the past. So that all children born of such marriages since Malta became a British possession are bastards, in spite of the sanction of the British Crown. The effect of this sweeping declaration is incalculable. It is impossible to foresee the confusion that may result from it. True, her Majesty's Government has stated in Parliament that the declaration of the Pope against the validity of mixed marriages shall not have a retrospective effect. But of two things one—either the Pope has now no legal power to invalidate mixed marriages for the future, or he has power to invalidate them in the past. The Government's excuse for the whole business is that in annexing Malta we bound ourselves to enforce the Canon Law, which declares all marriages invalid that are not in accordance with the decrees of Trent. "No Act of Parliament," says the *Tablet* in an article on this subject, "could make legal what Canon Law declares to be illegal." If that be true, how can Her Majesty's Government promise that the Pope's declaration shall have no retrospective effect? If the Government can override the decrees of Trent in the past, what is there to prevent its overriding them for the future?

But is it true that we are under any engagement to enforce the Canon Law in Malta? The Government relies on the proclamation issued by the British Commissioner on taking possession of Malta. The only words in that document which bear on the subject are the following:—"He (the King) will protect your churches, your holy religion, your persons, and your property." What has that to do with the Canon Law? Absolutely nothing. In annexing Mohammedan States in India we have guaranteed to

the natives their religious establishments and revenues. Does that mean that we have undertaken to enforce the law of the Koran in those States? The idea is preposterous. By the Canon Law of every Mussulman State the non-Mussulman can never become a citizen, can never bear arms, can never give evidence against a Mussulman, can never marry a Mussulman; with a multitude of other disabilities. Yet if the reasoning of Her Majesty's Government is correct as regards Malta, it is equally valid as regards India.

Nor is this all. If the Canon Law prevails in Malta, it prevails in its integrity. No part of it has been abolished. The Canon Law makes marriage indissoluble without a Papal dispensation. It follows, of course, that the children of divorced persons are bastards in Malta and incapable of inheriting property. Indeed, there is no end to the confusion in which this blundering Government has involved the unfortunate people of Malta, and also other British subjects who have contracted mixed marriages there. The law of mortmain, for example, has been established in Malta since our occupation of the island. But the law of mortmain is a direct invasion of Canon Law, and if Canon Law prevails it is obvious that the law of mortmain is as invalid as mixed marriages. The Pope, it will be observed, graciously allows the validity of marriages when both parties are outside the Roman communion. But the authority which sanctions may also forbid. So that even "non-Catholics" in Malta depend on the Pope's permission for the validity of their marriages. As regards mixed marriages, the Government has not waited for the promised "Project of Law." It has already abrogated the licences hitherto granted to the English clergy and ministers of other denominations to celebrate marriages. There are other disagreeable aspects of the question, such as the imposition on the scanty revenues of Malta of the expenses of Sir Lintorn Simmons's mission. On these we do not dwell at present; for we are anxious to fix the attention of the public on the daring invasion of the prerogative of the Crown—which means the prerogative of the British people—perpetrated by the Government in this Malta business. Tories accuse the Liberal party, forsooth! of aiming at establishing "Rome Rule" in Ireland, and here they are themselves establishing "Rome Rule" in Malta with a vengeance. We claim for our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects perfect equality with ourselves before the law; but we are not prepared to pay for the Persico Mission to Ireland by the abrogation of the supremacy of British law in Malta.

THE EDUCATING POWER OF ALCOHOL.

WHEN a few months ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer told us that the main portion of his surplus was derived from an increase in the taste for rum, he could himself little have dreamed that this would help the technical education of the country, so that the beer-consumer and the dram-drinker actually pay for the instruction of the sober classes of the community. And yet this is come to pass; for on Friday night last the House of Commons agreed that an annual sum amounting to little short of £900,000, derived from the increased tax on beer and spirits, may be devoted to teaching the people of the United Kingdom how to spend their time better than by boozing in the public-house.

One of the singular phenomena of our parliamentary procedure is that matters of grave importance to the State are often disposed of without attracting

attention either inside or outside the House. Thus, at the very fag-end of last session, when almost everyone had left town, the Technical Instruction Act became law; and the last few days of this session have seen an even more important measure passed almost without discussion, and with almost no notice from the press. A personal encounter on the same evening between the front benches received far more attention than the passing of a measure which without doubt is one of the most remarkable and far-reaching steps with regard to popular education in England that have been taken since Mr. Forster's Act of 1870. For what does Mr. Arthur Acland's amendment, now accepted by the Government, amount to? It amounts to this—that the County Councils in England are empowered to spend no less a sum than £750,000 per annum—being the whole fraction of the so-called "residue" belonging to England under the Local Taxation Bill—for the purposes of Technical (including Commercial and Agricultural) Education, as authorised by the Act of 1889. The importance of this decision can hardly be overrated, for, as Sir William Harcourt pointed out, the definition of the instruction given under the Act is so widely drawn as to include not only the principles of science and art applicable to industries, but also any other form of instruction, including modern languages and commercial and agricultural subjects, which may be sanctioned by the Department of Science and Art. This goes a long way to cover what may be called intermediate education. No restriction is placed on the County Councils or other local authorities as to the precise manner in which the sums thus accruing to them shall be spent, provided it be in accordance with the provisions of the Technical Education Act; and these provisions are wide enough to enable the Councils to apportion the grant either for building and equipment, or for subsidising existing schools, or for founding new ones. The arguments used by Mr. Acland were strong, and to them the Government wisely yielded. He pointed out that whilst Wales, Scotland, and Ireland each got a large share of the money set free by the dropping of the licensing proposals for educational purposes, England, as the Bill stood, got nothing for this object; whereas if England shared proportionately, she ought to have somewhere about a million sterling. Mr. Goschen not only at once accepted this part of the amendment, but on slight pressure agreed to permit the devotion of not the half but the whole of the residue for the purposes of technical instruction should the County Councils see fit to take this course. This sudden, complete, and sensible conversion of the Chancellor stands in remarkable contrast to the extraordinary position which the Government thought fit to take up on the question of the apportionment of the Scotch part of the grant. And yet it is not difficult to read between the lines. For once we in England are out of the clutches of the denominational struggle about education. The high and dry Church and State party cannot for very shame oppose the application of imperial funds for general technical education, and so we have gained from a Tory Government not only the national recognition of the necessity of a scientific and technical training for our people, but, what is even more to the purpose, the wherewithal to carry that recognition into effect.

Only last year we hailed with satisfaction the bonus of a miserable £15,000 a year to the higher education of our local University Colleges, and this year we have had to be contented with a still more minute grant of £5,000 for technical education. Now, without warning of any kind, we are placed in the position of being permitted to deal for educational purposes with an annual sum exceeding three-

quarters of a million. Of course it is only a permissive power which is granted to County Councils, just as the adoption of the Technical Act is permissive. And this is all we can legitimately ask for. But if the Government can thus act sensibly and generously towards England and Wales—for the Principality has obtained equally satisfactory terms for its Intermediate Education—why are the demands made by the great mass of Scotch members so persistently, or, using Sir William Harcourt's amended phrase, so "contemptuously" refused? The reason is not far to seek. It is that the Government—vainly, we believe—flatter themselves that next year they will pass a Bill for "assisted" elementary education in England, playing this as a trump card to aid their score at the approaching General Election. In their heart of hearts, they have no love for free education; they wish to fix a limit for their English legislation *in petto*—thus far shalt thou go, and no further. So they make Scotland the scapegoat, and by a condition which is as absurd as it is dishonest, tie down the money to be spent in freeing the compulsory standards only, although nine-tenths of them are free already; at the same time "tipping the wink" to the canny Scot that if he wishes to do so, he can put this sum into one pocket for repayment of the rates, whilst out of the other pocket he may take enough to free the higher standards in all his schools. By such tactics does the Government propose to defend its position when, next Session, it may come to legislate for free education in England!

All those interested in education in this country must now bestir themselves to induce the County Councils to apportion the sums which fall to their share for aiding the technical and commercial education of our people; and here we may notice that this grant can be apportioned, not only by County Councils which have already adopted the Technical Act of 1889, but also by those who have hitherto not seen their way to do so.

We have waited long to see the advice and recommendations of Royal Commission after Royal Commission adopted; let us take care that this opportunity, now that we have secured it, is not lost; for certain it is that such another will scarcely occur in our lifetime. The National Association for the Promotion of Technical and Secondary Education, with Lord Hartington at its head, has already done much, both by ways which are seen and by such as do not meet the public eye, to forward the cause which its members have at heart. It may well be proud of the Parliamentary achievements of its secretary, Mr. Acland; but its most important work has yet to be accomplished, and that is to awaken and stimulate amongst the people such a sense of the vast importance of the bearing of the question on the prosperity, and even on the life, of the nation, that the boon now held out may be cordially welcomed, and widely and wisely applied.

COMPENSATION FOR THE DUKE OF BEDFORD.

THE characteristic scene which took place last Tuesday in the House of Lords illustrates not inaptly the time-worn theory that it is by intermeddling in small matters that the Upper Chamber steadily exhausts its slender store of public respect, and hastens the hour of its own effacement. As every one knows, the House of Commons recently yielded to an unmistakable pressure of opinion, and decided to sweep away the gates and bars which still survive in Bloomsbury, to molest the passage and con-

venience of all travellers to the North. Committees of both Houses unhesitatingly decided against compensating anyone for any supposed injury which such a necessary reform might work. Even the Peers had passed the Bill as it stood; when suddenly, at the eleventh hour, after the third reading had been carried, the representatives of the Liberty and Property Defence League appeared upon the scene, and, apparently determined to lose no opportunity of making the "rights of property" unpopular, succeeded in so far appealing to the prejudices of their audience as to obtain the insertion of a clause sanctioning the principle of compensation. As might be expected, the strongest supporters of this reactionary and pedantic course were Lord Bramwell, Lord Selborne, and Lord Wemyss, but even they were surpassed by the Lord Chancellor in his zeal to champion the privileges of Peers. It is natural enough to find Lord Wemyss and Lord Halsbury, and, in these days, Lord Selborne, taking such a line; but we confess that we are astonished to see Lord Salisbury supporting them, and defending a totally unusual course by talking with something like impertinence about the "integrity of Parliamentary practice." At least it is to be hoped that the Commons will hold to the principle which they have just laid down, and defeat this unreasonable and irritating endeavour to create friction and exasperate public feeling, and to damage a necessary and desired reform.

Some singular outbreaks of unwisdom have manifested themselves of late in this connection on the theme of compensation. We are told that if people buy houses behind bars or gates, and the public authorities subsequently decide to take the bars or gates away, they must go, cap in hand, to the dwellers about and ask them whether it was the existence of the bars or gates which brought them there; and, if so, what they want to be paid when the bars and gates are taken down. The principle apparently is that when anybody finds that, owing to circumstances, the surroundings of his house become less pleasant than he thought they would be, he can call on the public purse to make it up to him. The circumstances may be public or private, local or universal. For the sake of illustration, and to avoid invidiousness, we will call our individual Q. The quiet street Q. lives in may, owing to municipal wants or improvements, become a noisy thoroughfare. The view which Q.'s windows commanded may be spoilt by the raising of an ugly house in front of them. The gardens which attracted Q. to the neighbourhood—there is a case in Chelsea of this kind to-day—may change hands, and be cut up into building lots. The church which Q. frequents, and desires to live close to, may be removed or fall into disuse. The delightful neighbours, whose society Q. came in search of, may decide to live elsewhere. In every case alike Q. suffers, and somebody else, it may be argued, gains. Does it follow in the mouths of these prophets that Q. is to have compensation, and that somebody else must pay?

We are putting no impossible or extravagant case. Of course, if Q. had stipulated with the public for his view, or for the contiguity of his church and his neighbours, he might support a claim upon the public purse. Even then we have a strong conviction that the public would not be so foolish as to entertain it. But in the case of the Bloomsbury gates and bars, there is no such stipulation. The leaseholders in Bloomsbury, it is admitted, would have no claim against the Duke of Bedford, had he swept away their cherished impediments without a word of warning. The case for the leaseholders is given up. The only claim which the advocates of compensation can logically support, is a claim

on the landlord's behalf; and they have rashly committed themselves to the position that, if in a matter of this nature the public convenience demand a change, which cannot be shown to entail upon any one any actual loss, a single landlord may insist on being paid, before he yields to the public convenience, a sum which no one can accurately estimate, but which represents a general toll to the system of land-ownership in London. On that issue the contest is clear, and we owe the Lords thanks for having pointed it out. If the question of the rights of landowners in London, of the relation which their claims bear to those of the public, and of the support which those claims find in the conscience and reason of Londoners, is to be forced into the foreground, we, who are Liberals, shall have no reason to regret it. But it is by upholding privileges of this kind, and by stretching them to an extent which even their owners do not ask, in the fashion followed by Lord Selborne and Lord Wemyss, that the representatives of these rights shatter their position, and with consummate folly hasten the advent of changes which they dread. To the majority in the House of Lords, it appears, the idea of the public convenience as in any way superior to private claims never for a moment occurs. But surely nothing could be more short-sighted than to refuse, as they refuse, to see that the revival of citizenship in London means the enlargement of municipal feeling and of municipal rights, and that those whose interests may conflict with that movement cannot act more unwisely than to take up at the outset of the struggle an attitude which the reason of all moderate men condemns.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE LAND QUESTION.

THE Land Question is made up of many questions, varying according to the circumstances of the hour and the wants of society. What we now call the Land Question is not what was so understood in the youth of men who are still not much over middle life. About thirty or forty years ago the phrase first came into use. It then signified a group of minor economical problems. It meant especially a better system of conveyancing, a cheaper mode of land transfer than that which then existed and, Land Transfer Acts notwithstanding, now exists. When Cobden used the memorable words, "If I were five-and-twenty or thirty, instead of, unhappily, twice that number of years, I would take Adam Smith in hand—I would not go beyond him, I would have no politics in it—I would take Adam Smith in hand, and I would have a league for free land, just as we had a league for free trade in corn," he expressed the extreme demands of land reformers in 1864; and moderate those extreme demands were. Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright deplored the evils of the aggregation of land in the hands of a few owners, and they rightly believed that this had been artificially favoured by a costly system of conveyancing (which made the lawyer's bill, in the case of small properties, disproportionate to the price), by the law of primogeniture, by the power of tying up land for long periods, and by a system of taxation which favoured owners of land at the expense of the rest of the community. Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright drew no sharp distinction between real and personal property. They would have been satisfied had both been treated alike by the Legislature. A great change came to pass in consequence of the writings of Mr. John Stuart Mill. Earlier thinkers had laid stress on the difference between land and other forms of wealth. Patrick Edward

Dove, to name a gifted but forgotten writer, had enunciated principles akin to those expounded by Mill, and formulated proposals which remind one of those of Mr. Henry George. "We have no hesitation," he wrote many years ago, "in predicting that all civilised communities must ultimately abolish all revenue restrictions on industry, and draw the whole taxation from the rent of the soil; and this because (as we shall show in a future portion of the subject) the rents of the soil are the common produce of the whole labour of the community." Those early apostles of land reform were voices crying in the wilderness. Few listened; fewer were convinced. Two of the most important economical movements of our time may be traced to Ricardo. Lassalle, the father of modern Socialism, professed to base his teaching on Ricardo's law of wages—"the iron law of wages," as Lassalle called it; Mill deduced his proposals relative to land from Ricardo's law of rent, which traces economic rent to the differences in the inherent qualities of the soils, due to circumstances independent of the labour of the owner. Mill drew practical deductions from this theory. He showed how the landowner profited by the growth of society, and made it an article in the creed of almost every Liberal that land ought to be dealt with by the Legislature on principles different from those governing other property; that the owner ought to be subject to special duties; and that society could not let him do with his own as he liked. The programme of the Land Tenure Association was based on the idea, perfectly sound, that land is limited in quantity, and that its value may depend less on the merits of the owners than on the labours of others. Why do we now hear little of that programme? Why is the "unearned increment" rarely named? Why has Mr. Henry George's *impôt unique*, which was to absorb the unearned increment, failed to enlist lasting converts? Partly because it does not everywhere exist; at all events, it is not of the importance which it appeared to Mill, writing when the rent of land was everywhere rising. The income from lands assessed under Schedule A fell from £66,911,000 in 1875 to £65,093,000 in 1888. The "unearned increment," said Mr. Giffen lately, "is plainly *un peu de chose*." No doubt, what he calls "the revolutionary conditions of the last ten years" have had much to do with turning attention away from the unearned increment. Nor do the gallant efforts of the Land Nationalisation Society make much way. "Nationalisation!" said a speaker at a rural meeting on the subject lately, "that word ought to have six months' imprisonment."

Meantime another question has pressed to the front. While agricultural land has been falling in value, that of urban land has continued to rise. "I once saw a lease of a nobleman's London estate in Elizabeth's reign," writes Professor Rogers in the interesting current number of *Subjects of the Day*. "It was £30 a year. At the present time it is reputed to give an annual rent of a quarter of a million. This growth is entirely the work of other people, of their presence and of their outlay." While the covenants in agricultural leases have become more rational, those in use in towns remain as oppressive as before; while we hear of reduction of rents to farmers, advances have taken place on the Bedford and Westminster estates. The Agricultural Holdings Act and tenacious local customs give some security to the farmer who has spent his capital on his farm; the tradesman who has risked his all in a business rooted in one locality is at the mercy of his landowner. He may be ejected unless he consents to harassing terms, pays a heavy fine, and agrees first to make his house better than he found it, and then to pay a rent based on his own outlay.

Every year the anomalous position of the great ground landowners in large cities becomes more striking. The wonder is that the movement for the enfranchisement of leaseholds did not begin long ago. May it prosper! Who knows but there may come a time when tradesmen not ten minutes' walk from Westminster may enjoy rights akin to those acquired by every Irish peasant?

There are signs that another movement is taking a definite direction. A common mistake of early land reformers, and, for that matter, of modern land reformers, was the assumption that the evils of which they complain could be redressed by one measure. They had a nostrum for diseases needing varied treatment. Closer study, larger experience, shows the fallaciousness of this theory. In the life of every community, every city, almost every village, come, often unexpectedly, occasions when the acquisition of land for public purposes would be beneficial. The formation of a street which will beautify a town, and make it more healthy, the opening of a public park, the carrying out of public improvements, without saddling ratepayers not merely with the compensation of the expropriated owners, but also of a parasitical growth of collateral interests—all these and many other undertakings would be more practicable than they are if it were not necessary to obtain special powers from Parliament for the acquisition of land for such purposes. Why should not such communities possess an inherent power on payment of fair compensation to acquire land? Why, as Mr. R. T. Reid lately suggested in a resolution which he proposed in the House of Commons, should not town and county councils be free to obtain by agreement, or compulsorily on fair terms, land which they deem needed for all public objects? In the United States we hear much of "the right of eminent domain": that is, to cite Judge Cooley, "the lawful authority which exists in every sovereignty to control and regulate those rights of a public nature which pertain to its subjects in common, and to appropriate and control individual property for the public benefit, as the public safety, necessity, convenience, or welfare, may demand." In most countries this general right is recognised; and in America it is indisputable that this authority may be exercised not merely by the State directly, but by cities and other corporate bodies, as its delegate. True, legislative permission is required before this right is put in force; we are not citing American practices as precise precedents for the demands now taking shape in many minds. But only let the right of "eminent domain" be fully recognised here, and what can be said against town or county councils urging this plea—"We ought to be masters at home; we ought to be free to say what local purposes are public, and to be able to obtain on payment of a fair price the land required to give them effect"? In the reports and evidence of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes are the germs of a new and far extending development of the Land Question.

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The summer assizes which have just concluded in Cork furnish a very striking instance of the application of this rule. They were dull and uneventful. No case, save one, tried there created the slightest real interest in the city or out of it. And yet the law of "Papists, stand aside!" was applied in its full rigour. One of the cases tried was that of a man named Kelly for the murder of his sister. It was originally tried in the county of Cork, where the jury disagreed, and it was then removed to the city. The case was one without the slightest connection with politics or agrarianism. The prisoner, a country carpenter, was charged with having beaten his sister to death. Popular sympathy in the remote locality where the crime occurred was mainly against the prisoner, as was shown by the fact that about a dozen persons of the humblest class of life voluntarily came forward to give evidence against him. Outside the locality the case created no interest whatever. The original jury who tried it were, it was said, divided into men who thought there should be a verdict of murder, others who thought there should be a verdict of manslaughter, others who did not think either crime proved. Kelly was last week put forward to stand his second trial, and then commenced the scene so common in an Irish courthouse, so astounding to an English spectator. Name after name was called by the Clerk of Arraignment. In answer to his call a respectable man advances to the jury-box, and takes the Testament in his right hand. "Stand Aside!" rings out the challenge from the Solicitor for the Crown. And, flushing scarlet at the insult, the victim throws down the book and turns away. In all, upon this trial thirty-two Catholics were ordered to stand aside. They included some of the most respectable men in the city. One of them was a Mr. Dunne. Mr. Dunne was recommended for High Sheriff by the Corporation, and for the year 1886 appointed High Sheriff by the then Conservative viceroy, Lord Carnarvon. He performed all the duties of this most important office, selected the grand juries at the three assizes of the year, executed all civil processes in his bailiwick, attended the judges with all due and usual ceremonial, provided their escort, preserved by his personal attendance and his bailiffs due order in their courts. It was never pretended that this gentleman in any way failed in the due performance of all his functions as sheriff. And yet, although Mr. Dunne was considered fit by the Government to be the first officer of the Crown in his own city, when he was called to the jury-box in this wretched case of William

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SCOTLAND AND THE GOVERNMENT.

THE crowning folly of the Government this session has after all been its treatment of Scotland. The fate of Unionism depends very largely on the Scotch vote at the next election. The normal number of Tory seats is ten: but the Government even now counts twenty-seven nominal supporters among the seventy-two Scotch members. If it can maintain or if it can better its position in Scotland at the next election it will probably win all along the line; if it reverts to or falls below its normal strength, the victory of the Liberal party will probably be secure. Every consideration of electioneering, to say nothing of statesmanship, would point to a steady cultivation of the Scotch vote as the primary duty of the Unionist party at the present time. Now Scotland has asked very little from the Government this session. There are only three points on which public opinion has been strongly pronounced. One is Free Education. Another is the systematic and apparently invincible neglect of Scotch business in the House of Commons. And a third is Scotch Home Rule—by which is meant neither a separate Parliament nor a separate executive, but the practical control of Scotch affairs by the Scotch representatives. On all of these points the Government has this session wantonly or negligently offended a national sentiment—the existence of which it cannot pretend to ignore.

The refusal of Free Education was either wholly wanton or, what is worse, it was dictated by the sectarian interests of the clerical party in England. The half-and-half system had in one year proved intolerable. It was exasperating the parents, it was denuding the schools of their most promising pupils, it was driving the school-boards to distraction, and it was filling the schoolmasters with well-founded apprehension for the safety of their salaries. After the partial abolition of fees the means had to be found somehow for relieving the other standards, and either the ratepayer or the schoolmaster would have to suffer. In this complication the money set free by Mr. Goschen's financial miscarriage appeared to the Scotch people a veritable Godsend. There was really but one opinion in Scotland—that the money must go to the abolition of fees in the elementary schools. Grave questions as to the teaching of religion had been waived by common consent in 1889, in order that the free system might have a start. No such question was even mooted when, in 1890, came the chance of completing the system which had been started in 1889. The overwhelming majorities of Scotch members in the House of Commons only faintly reflected the virtual unanimity of the country. The Scotch Tory members strained their allegiance to

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There are signs that another movement is taking a definite direction. A common mistake of early land reformers, and, for that matter, of modern land reformers, was the assumption that the evils of which they complain could be redressed by one measure. They had a nostrum for diseases needing varied treatment. Closer study, larger experience, shows the fallaciousness of this theory. In the life of every community, every city, almost every village, come, often unexpectedly, occasions when the acquisition of land for public purposes would be beneficial. The formation of a street which will beautify a town, and make it more healthy, the opening of a public park, the carrying out of public improvements, without saddling ratepayers not merely with the compensation of the expropriated owners, but also of a parasitical growth of collateral interests—all these and many other undertakings would be more practicable than they are if it were not necessary to obtain special powers from Parliament for the acquisition of land for such purposes. Why should not such communities possess an inherent power on payment of fair compensation to acquire land? Why, as Mr. R. T. Reid lately suggested in a resolution which he proposed in the House of Commons, should not town and county councils be free to obtain by agreement, or compulsorily on fair terms, land which they deem needed for all public objects? In the United States we hear much of "the right of eminent domain": that is, to cite Judge Cooley, "the lawful authority which exists in every sovereignty to control and regulate those rights of a public nature which pertain to its subjects in common, and to appropriate and control individual property for the public benefit, as the public safety, necessity, convenience, or welfare, may demand." In most countries this general right is recognised; and in America it is indisputable that this authority may be exercised not merely by the State directly, but by cities and other corporate bodies, as its delegate. True, legislative permission is required before this right is put in force; we are not citing American practices as precise precedents for the demands now taking shape in many minds. But only let the right of "eminent domain" be fully recognised here, and what can be said against town or county councils urging this plea—"We ought to be masters at home; we ought to be free to say what local purposes are public, and to be able to obtain on payment of a fair price the land required to give them effect"? In the reports and evidence of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes are the germs of a new and far extending development of the Land Question.

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flagrant instance of jury-packing is properly ventilated and discussed. We trust that the mistake will not be made of charging what has happened against underlings such as Crown Prosecutors and Crown Solicitors. Every prosecution in Ireland is conducted under the personal control and direction of the Attorney-General. "Rebels at Cork are patriots at Madrid." Mr. Attorney-General Madden is a mild-spoken and Constitutional Conservative at Westminster and a rabid Orangeman at Cork. He ought to have the courage of his convictions and to bring in a Bill to excuse Cork Roman Catholics from being on juries. It is hard on business men to have to attend daily in Court during a long assize, in order that whenever called to the Book they may be commanded to "Stand aside!"

SCOTLAND AND THE GOVERNMENT.

THE crowning folly of the Government this session has after all been its treatment of Scotland. The fate of Unionism depends very largely on the Scotch vote at the next election. The normal number of Tory seats is ten: but the Government even now counts twenty-seven nominal supporters among the seventy-two Scotch members. If it can maintain or if it can better its position in Scotland at the next election it will probably win all along the line; if it reverts to or falls below its normal strength, the victory of the Liberal party will probably be secure. Every consideration of electioneering, to say nothing of statesmanship, would point to a steady cultivation of the Scotch vote as the primary duty of the Unionist party at the present time. Now Scotland has asked very little from the Government this session. There are only three points on which public opinion has been strongly pronounced. One is Free Education. Another is the systematic and apparently invincible neglect of Scotch business in the House of Commons. And a third is Scotch Home Rule—by which is meant neither a separate Parliament nor a separate executive, but the practical control of Scotch affairs by the Scotch representatives. On all of these points the Government has this session wantonly or negligently offended a national sentiment—the existence of which it cannot pretend to ignore.

The refusal of Free Education was either wholly wanton or, what is worse, it was dictated by the sectarian interests of the clerical party in England. The half-and-half system had in one year proved intolerable. It was exasperating the parents, it was denuding the schools of their most promising pupils, it was driving the school-boards to distraction, and it was filling the schoolmasters with well-founded apprehension for the safety of their salaries. After the partial abolition of fees the means had to be found somehow for relieving the other standards, and either the ratepayer or the schoolmaster would have to suffer. In this complication the money set free by Mr. Goschen's financial miscarriage appeared to the Scotch people a veritable Godsend. There was really but one opinion in Scotland—that the money must go to the abolition of fees in the elementary schools. Grave questions as to the teaching of religion had been waived by common consent in 1889, in order that the free system might have a start. No such question was even mooted when, in 1890, came the chance of completing the system which had been started in 1889. The overwhelming majorities of Scotch members in the House of Commons only faintly reflected the virtual unanimity of the country. The Scotch Tory members strained their allegiance to

their party last year when they helped to force the beginnings of Free Education on the Government, and they are not to be greatly blamed if they, reluctantly, no doubt, this year stood by their party. The blame rests wholly with the Government. Mr. Goschen refused to apply the Scotch share of his *caduca* as the Scotch members desired it should be applied; and he forced upon his insufficient contribution an ear-mark which even his astute Lord Advocate was unable to explain. Days were wasted over the draftsman's jargon which somehow or other implied that only the "compulsory standards" were to be set free. No such limitation was placed upon the grant last year, and the only conclusion possible is that it was inserted as a pledge to the English obscurantists who have the ear of the Prime Minister. The Scotch members are a patient race. It was Sir William Harcourt who denounced the "unexampled insolence" of the Government in refusing without answer or explanation the last appeal made by Mr. Campbell-Bannerman on behalf of the Scotch members that their own money should be applied in their own way.

With the exception of the Police Bill, there has been no other Scotch business worth mentioning before the House. The Police Bill is a purely Anglican conception, born of English necessities and framed on English lines. The local authorities have doubtless been tempted by the opportunity of handling imperial money, but even they have received it coldly. The remnant of the Scotch members left in town have in much the same spirit and for much the same reasons permitted the Bill to pass. It is only by an accident that the Bill has not created 4,000 freehold offices, for the Lord Advocate declared that it was intended to give the constables a vested interest in their places, and the majority of the Select Committee placidly accepted his decision. It was all a mistake, however, chargeable to the fact that the Bill was an English Bill hastily adapted to Scotch conditions before the Minister in charge had time to ascertain the meaning of its ill-drawn and ambiguous provisions. By another unfortunate mistake the opportunity for reconsideration which Mr. Smith conditionally promised was forfeited. A Bill which nobody asked for, which nobody heartily approves, and which the working classes have uniformly condemned, has been hustled through its various stages after the majority of Scotch members had gone home for the holidays. The Scotch estimates were taken on Wednesday under the same irritating conditions. That is almost the whole story of the Session, and it faithfully repeats the experience of previous Sessions. Scotland, as usual, has been denied the things she demanded, and forced to accept the things she did not want; and, as usual, has had the mortification of seeing her national business postponed to the very fag-end of the Session, when effective discussion becomes impossible.

The progress of the Police Bill was distinguished by one remarkable incident. By the narrow majority of eight the Government succeeded in defeating a motion to refer the Bill to a committee consisting of all the Scotch members. Had this proposal been carried, it would have established the kind of rational Home Rule which would probably satisfy the majority of the Scotch people. It would have formally recognised the principle that before dealing finally with any measure affecting Scotland, the House should ascertain the legislative will of Scotland's representatives. Only one step more would have been required—viz., to place this Scotch Committee of the House of Commons on a statutory basis. There is a good precedent for this suggestion in the Statutory Committee of the House of Lords, to which has been entrusted the authority

of that House as a Supreme Court of Appeal. That all purely Scotch business—including the estimates—should pass through such a Committee before coming under final review by the House, is a form of Home Rule which has long commended itself to Scottish Liberals. The Unionists have really nothing to urge against it, except that it would be an awkward precedent for Ireland. In point of fact they have conceded one-half of the principle already. Three Committees on Scotch affairs have been appointed this Session, and in all of them the essential element of nationality was recognised. The Police Bill Committee itself was exclusively Scotch—the only English member being himself a Scotchman. But in this and in the other Committees the representation of Scotland was reversed. The Liberal majority became a minority, and the Tory minority became a majority. A Select Committee so constituted represents neither the House of Commons nor the Scotch members, and the usual grounds for treating its decisions with respect entirely fail. In this case, also, the deliberate demands—one might truly say, the admitted rights—of Scotland have been sacrificed to political exigencies with which she has no concern. Four years of Unionist Administration have taught us that the penalty we have to pay for our partial defection from Liberalism is the abandonment of self-government for ourselves. A Unionist Government means a Scotch Executive hostile to the Scotch section of the Legislature. On the other hand, the events of this Session have made clear to the Scotch people a truth which they have hitherto only dimly apprehended. A Liberal majority in the House of Commons in future means Home Rule for Scotland, and that without any constitutional disturbance whatever. A Liberal majority in the House of Commons will give us a Scotch Executive in harmony with the Scotch membership, and it will, there is little doubt, establish the Scotch members as a Standing Committee for all Scotch affairs. From this point of view Scotch Liberals have no reason to be dissatisfied with the results of the Session. But the course which the Government has chosen to take remains inexplicable, and one is driven to the conjecture that Her Majesty's Ministers have resolved to stimulate the demand for Scotch Home Rule in its extreme form, in the desperate hope of profiting by the difficulties to which it might be expected to give rise.

EDMUND ROBERTSON.

A PROFESSOR ON LECTURES.

THE editor of the *New Review* must be congratulated on a capital stroke of business. He has given to his periodical something very like the promptitude of a daily newspaper. For the lecture which Professor Max Müller delivered at Oxford on August 1st appears in the *New Review* for the present month. It is not only this feat of publication which makes the lecture conspicuous. Both the matter and the manner are peculiarly happy. Professor Max Müller set himself to vindicate the system of the Oxford University Extension Lectures against a great deal of hostile criticism, and he has performed his task with admirable spirit and distinct success. He does not lay undue stress on the fact that these lectures have grown in five years from 27 courses to 148, or that the number of students in round numbers now reaches the respectable total of 18,000. It might be said that this merely illustrates the popularity of a system which makes no call on the intellect and lays no burden on the memory. Nothing is easier than to imagine that you are learning by listening, when what is said passes in at one ear and out at the other. Professor Max Müller is familiar with auditors who are liable to this experience, but he

does not find them amongst his students. They figure at the Royal Institution, where a lecture is not followed by an examination; and they display the entertaining and invincible ignorance of the man who, after Professor Max Müller had spent an hour in showing that Hebrew was not the mother tongue of the world, thanked him for having proved that this was the language of Adam and Eve. Goodness knows how many nurseries and dinner-tables have been misled since by this highly respectable obtuseness, or how many circles of fashion have deferred to the authority of the dowager who hinted to Faraday her disbelief in his statement that water consists of hydrogen and oxygen. There is a kind of incredulity against which science and the arts of exposition hurl themselves in vain. The present writer can never forget a lecture on Dante which he heard in an American city. The audience consisted chiefly of ladies, who followed the lecturer with breathless interest, and took copious notes. But when he told them that in Dante's *Paradise* the virgin saint was more honoured than the married saint, they put down their pencils with a frown, and refused to make a memorandum of anything so obnoxiously improbable.

But the University Extension Lectures are not attended simply by recruiting-sergeants for the topics of small talk, nor by people like Dorothea Brooke's father, who "went into that sort of thing a great deal once, but fortunately pulled up in time." Professor Max Müller's great point is that for the intelligent student the spoken word must have influences which the written word, however powerful, can never possess. The lecturer who knows his business will enter into all the difficulties of his pupils. He will recall the struggles through which he passed from doubt to conviction, from imperfect knowledge to a mastery of his resources. He adapts his arguments to his listeners; he sees what is luminous to them and what is not, and varies his illustrations so as to leave no misunderstanding. He recommends the books which should be read, and thus he is an ally of the writer, not an obstacle to private study. But, above all, his personal sympathy with the students is a guiding force, which is naturally peculiar in its degree to oral tuition. It is often the magic rod which strikes the unwilling rock, and brings forth the water which sustains the thirsty inquirer. Our professor is hard on metaphors, but we trust he will not object to this one, although its origin is unscientific. However, the lecturer's responsibility does not end with his discourse. After an hour of exposition, he spends another hour in answering questions and giving advice for private reading. Then he has to examine the essays of his pupils; and at the end of the course of lectures, independent examiners put the pupils through their facings, "and only those who have satisfied both the examiners and the lecturers have a right to receive a certificate." This sort of probation surely does not err on the side of leniency. With justice Professor Max Müller claims it as a test both of the oral instruction and of the student's reading, and he fairly asks whether, if books alone were sufficient to attain these satisfactory results, "our lecturers would have been so thoroughly appreciated in the various provincial centres as they evidently have been hitherto."

It is plain that the lecture which is a genuine stimulus to solid acquirement and not to mere smattering, is much more practical than the ordinary sermon. There are few preachers who would care to see their congregations undergo an examination in the matters which are expounded Sunday after Sunday. Considering that the gift of preaching is extremely rare, it is strange that our pulpit orators have not been selected like the University lecturers, and that society has been left to the untutored loquacity of a great number of excellent men, who often defeat, by the misfortunes of their tongues, the admirable purpose of their lives. A system which puts into the pulpit a man who is listened to for the

sake of convention and not of conviction is surely in need of amendment. It threatens to approximate morally to the fatal exertions of Sydney Smith's "wild curates." The habit of sitting through sermons which convey no idea whatever, except that the parson is below the average of intelligence, clogs the intellect and soddens the moral sense. It would be judicious in the interests of religion to organise a corps of preachers who would take circuits like the judges. True, they would have to face the difficulty which, as Professor Max Müller says, is at the root of all teaching. We are not sufficiently careful to define our words. "When theologians are for ever disputing about inspiration, how much bad blood and bad language might be saved if some bishop or archbishop would give us an accurate definition of inspiration, so that we might know once for all what is comprehended by the name, and what is not." But surely this is not so simple as it seems, for by defining what you believe a word to mean, you do not force an opponent to construe it in the same sense. Politicians, like theologians, continue to wrangle, even when they have exhausted the resources of definition. In the simplicity of his heart, Professor Max Müller affirms that if some one would define "what is meant and what is not meant by Home Rule, nothing would be more useful for shortening sessions of Parliament." Alas, there are some things which transcend even a University lecturer's power of exposition! The most lucid explanation of Home Rule, so far from shortening a session, is likely to prolong it, because the dowagers who refuse to believe that water is made of hydrogen and oxygen, will not be convinced that Home Rule is not Rome Rule, or something else equally absurd or irrelevant.

THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND.

WE seem at length to have got to some understanding of the position and requirements of our considerable blind population. We have been miserably slow in doing so. There is not a country in the world except England, in which provision is not made by the State for the education of the blind. In England, classes have been established in the Board-schools of some half-dozen leading towns; and that is the sum total of the educational assistance which the State has given to its thousands of sightless young. There are about 30,000 totally blind persons in Great Britain, and there are probably 100,000 who cannot see sufficiently to be taught in an ordinary school. The great majority of the blind live the saddest and most useless lives imaginable; yet there is no necessary truth in the adage "as helpless as a blind man." There is an education for the blind as well as for the seeing, and wonderful are the results which may be, and which have been, obtained from it. But here in England we have not made this discovery for ourselves. For want of a little knowledge, which we might so easily have acquired; for want of a little energy, patience, and perseverance (qualities on which we pride ourselves), we have wasted, starved, or deliberately suppressed the latent powers of all these blind or half-blind fellow-subjects; and, while leaving them in want and in gloom, have almost compelled them to the wretchedest and most distressing form of idleness. By far the larger number of our blind are paupers, or all but paupers. We have suffered thousands of them to go struggling over the country, tied to a mangy dog, or grinding a hurdy-gurdy; or to sit at street-corners with placards round their necks, endlessly pawing and droning from unwieldy bibles; or to creep painfully in the homes of parents or friends not always willing and seldom able to support them; or to sit desolate and dark in the corners of our workhouses. But nearly all of these luckless and afflicted creatures have it in them to be active and cheerful members of the community, and to live by

bread of their own winning. This has been proved, but we have not proved it for ourselves. We left it to a blind American to show us, in our own country, what could be done for our blind. Dr. Francis J. Campbell, an American by birth, and the principal of the Royal Normal College for the Blind, in Upper Norwood, seems almost to have perfected an ideal method of his own for the intellectual and mechanical training of the sightless. But we shall return to him and his system.

The most welcome general point to be noted is that the State itself has at last shown some consciousness of its duties on this subject. That it *has* duties and responsibilities towards the blind is a proposition which scarcely admits of denial. Is it right that compulsory education should leave the blind out of account, who are dependent on education more, far more, than any other persons? Without education, and technical and mechanical training, the blind man is fit only for the companionship of his mangy dog or his barrel-organ. But the blind are as capable as the rest of us of receiving education, and with it they can make their way in the world. The education of the blind is, most literally, their stock-in-trade. We have shown that few of them have the means to educate themselves—shall we leave them to their terrier dogs, or to pine and rot in the workhouses, a burden on the rates? or shall we do—what is done by every other civilised State in the world—make their education their country's care?

Well, there has been a Royal Commission, and now there is a Bill before Parliament. These are both things to be thankful for, if only in a moderate degree. The Royal Commission was prevented from doing its work as quickly and as effectively as it might have been done; and the Bill before Parliament is a very inefficient piece of work; but the friends of the blind have for so long a time striven ineffectually to bring their cause before country and Government, that smaller successes than these would have been gratifying to them.

It was at first intended that the Royal Commission should deal solely with the question of the education of the blind; and had this intention been adhered to—instead of enlarging the Commission, and extending its instructions to include an inquiry into the condition of idiots and the deaf and dumb—the task which has been very imperfectly achieved in four years would have been properly accomplished in six months. Nevertheless, some points of importance were carried. Without absolutely recommending free education for the blind, the Commissioners dwelt strongly upon the need that the State should provide for the training of those who cannot provide for it themselves. At present scarcely one-third of the young blind are receiving any education whatever. Three-fourths of our blind, old and young, are absolutely dependent upon charity. A few of the young contrive to be pushed into a blind school of some sort, but in most of these schools the system, or systems, of education are worth very little. Those for whom no schooling of any kind is found had better be dead than alive, inasmuch as the existence of the uninstructed blind is a mere living death. Then there are those who lose their sight in youth, or at a still later period, who need quite another kind of training. These can do nothing unless they are taught some handicraft. How many institutions have we in which a person who loses his sight after the age of twenty can be taught a handicraft? It is necessary in the first place to understand that blindness need prevent no one from earning all that is necessary to support life in comfort, and in the second place that there is only one institution in the country (and that a private one) in which what is requisite to this end is provided. The little work that is done for the blind in a few Board-schools is not to be despised, but this is not the way to set about a very large and very difficult task. The blind must be taught in schools of their own, and in schools very different from most

of those to be found on this side of the Atlantic. Such schools, to whatever extent they may be supported by the State, must be under the State's inspection. To teach the blind to be self-supporting is the first thing; the second is to put them in the way of procuring the means of support. The one can be done, and the other.

Let us return for a moment to the Royal Normal College, where patient science triumphs over the defects of nature in a manner that is little less than marvellous. The basis of Dr. Campbell's system is a sound physical training. The vitality of the blind is below the average vitality of seeing persons, and it is the lack of physical power that leads to indolence, timidity, and discouragement. It is this defect that Dr. Campbell first sets himself to remedy; he does it step by step, in the gymnasium, in the playground, in the swimming-bath; and in weeks or months he has made a little athlete of the child who was at first so timid and so helpless that it dare not or could not put one foot before the other. Then he is ready to go to work upon their minds. Of some he makes skilled musicians—singers, players, or teachers—of others he makes the finest pianoforte-tuners in the world; nearly all of them he makes good for something. Ninety per cent. of his pupils force their own way in the world when they leave the college, and last year his ex-scholars earned £15,000 amongst them. He has solved the problem, how to give light to the blind; and the difference between the finished scholar of the Royal Normal College and the average blind beggar with his dog, is the difference between an Oxford prizeman and Swift's Yahoo.

THE SPEAKER'S GALLERY.

IV.—ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

IT is a quarter of a century since "*Atalanta in Calydon*" was published. Men now in middle age can remember the enthusiasm with which it was received. Born on the threshold of the Victorian era, within a month or two of the Queen's accession, here at last was a poet with a diction and a rhythm of his own, capable of doing high credit to his generation, and proving that the race of great English poets was not yet exhausted. "*Atalanta*" set men thinking of the golden promise of our literary giants: its affluence of expression, its intellectual force, its honeyed sweetness of tune recalled "*Venus and Adonis*" and "*Comus*." It seemed as if there was no height to which the young poet might not reach: nothing seemed wanting but choice of a theme more moving to our common English sympathies. Before the year was out, "*Atalanta*" was followed by "*Chastelard*." This argued fertility, and the chorus of praise rose higher, though here and there a voice was raised in protest in behalf of the Young Person, and even friendly critics began to hint that the young poet was too much intoxicated with his own powers of poetic representation to have an equally faultless instinct for the thing represented. Still this was regarded as a fault that time would cure. Then came the "*Poems and Ballads*," and those who considered that Mr. Swinburne had still a great future before him had to fight for their faith against a furious outcry from outraged morality.

It would be vain for anybody now to contend that Mr. Swinburne has, at least as yet, done all that some of us in the ardour of youthful homage expected of him, because we expected him to command as wide an audience as any poet of the first rank. This he has not done, whatever we may think of the worth of his actual achievement. Doubtless, the outcry over his "*Poems and Ballads*" gave a rough check to the expansion of his fame. Only the very hottest zealots of art for art's sake would deny that there was reasonable ground for offence. Still, it is no less indisputable that the artist's purpose was much misunderstood. And for this misunderstanding he

had to thank an element in his art that, more than anything else, has been an obstacle to his gaining a wider audience.

It is not too much to say that the "Poems and Ballads" would have given less offence if they had been more easily intelligible. The simplicity of Mr. Swinburne's language is only on the surface. In his earliest, as well as in his latest writings, one often encounters pages that contain no single word above the comprehension of a child, but which yet are woven together in so unfamiliar a syntax, and charged with such a subtlety of allusion, that the construction of the meaning is a hard task for a moderately quick-witted man. This told against his poems when the hue-and-cry was raised against them. Passages in which there was frequent reference to kissing and clinging, and lips, and eyes, and tresses, received an interpretation which close study of the words would not have warranted. But to be understood, the poems needed closer study than readers were always willing to give them, and, as Chaucer says, "men deemen gladly to the badder end." If the Young Person had time enough and wit enough and learning enough to, see what the poet would be at, the Young Person might be left to enjoy these triumphs of verbal music without any risk of moral contamination. At least half the danger lies in their ill repute and their obscurity.

It is, we believe, mainly this allusive obscurity of style, applied as it so often is to strange unfamiliar themes, that explains why Mr. Swinburne's poetry has never diffused itself outside the comparatively small circle of learned experts in verse. He has proved again and again that he can do what pleases him with words, and if such splendour of expression, such orchestral richness of poetic music, had been applied to themes of universal interest in a way that all could understand, the whole English-speaking world would have had no choice but to listen. He probably knows this as well as we do, and, nevertheless, "gangs his ain gait"—to what goal they only can tell who can see into the future. Perhaps the world will yet listen to the "Songs Before Sunrise." It is easier to judge why the world has not done so. The hatred of Kings and Priests that inspires most of these noble chants—and there is a certain nobility in their ardour as well as in their high technical qualities—is not an English sentiment; it is too fierce and unmeasured, too bookish and derivative, too much occupied with remote causes and persons concerning which the English public know little and care less. The poems read as if they had been written not for his countrymen but for the applause of Mazzini and Victor Hugo. The want of temperance and measure, the tendency to shriek and scold in high-pitched vituperation, to pelt with epithets that are more than a little coarse, and to revel in humour that is more than a little ribald, has marred his use of those occasions on which he has spoken to his countrymen directly, whether individually or collectively, whether in verse or in prose. His recent "Ode to Russia" is one instance out of many that might be given. Six or seven years ago, when the House of Lords threw out the Suffrage Extension Bill, he came to the aid of the Liberal Party with some stirring lyrics—"Clear the Way, my Lords and Lackeys," "O Lords, our Gods, Beneficent, Sublime," "A Word for the Country," and one or two more. But we doubt whether the Liberal forces felt particularly grateful to their Tyrtæus for such a stanza as this:—

"Bright sons of sublime prostitution,
You are made of the mire of the street;
Where your grandmothers walked in pollution,
Till a coronet shone at their feet.

Your Graces, whose faces
Bear high the bastard's brand,
Seem stronger no longer
Than all this honest land."

Hard-hitting is good, but this is too savage; it is scolding in the manner of the ancients in Athens or Billingsgate. To judge of Mr. Swinburne's poetic

powers by such effusions would be as unfair as to judge of Milton's by his political pamphlets. Perhaps poets are too hot-headed for present affairs.

Of Mr. Swinburne's dramatic compositions it is impossible for any one who has really studied them to speak otherwise than with profound respect. The most massive of his efforts in this direction is the trilogy founded on the life of Mary Queen of Scots, "Chastelard," "Bothwell," and "Mary Stuart." It is an immense intellectual achievement; considered merely as such, it is the greatest dramatic work of the century. Why is it not more widely read? Chiefly, we believe, for the reason that it is very hard reading. A man must have a good deal of leisure on his hands who aspires to get through "Bothwell." A society might tackle it. Why should not Mr. Furnivall let bygones be bygones, and found a Swinburne Society? Admirable materials for papers and discussions might be found in the disputable characters and theories of historical events that Mr. Swinburne has crowded into this vast trilogy. The truth is that the poet must be numbered among the fair Queen's victims.

"Which of these,
Which of them all that looked on her and loved,
And men spake well of them, and pride and hope
Were as their servants—which of all them now
Shall men speak well of?"

Dead as well as living, Queen Mary has been a fruitful cause of dementia. She has cast her spell over Mr. Swinburne, and so fascinated him with the puzzle of her character as to make him forget his duties as a dramatist and a poet, and bore his readers with tedious discussions of motives and laborious interpretations of historical facts which can interest only those who are fanatically enamoured of the heroine and passionately eager to realise how she felt and looked in every incident of her crowded life; what manner of men and women surrounded her, what personal ambitions and public prejudices she had to fight with; how her wit and courage served her here, while there she was misled by caprice and womanly weakness. As an historical study "Bothwell" is a magnificent piece of work, but it has dramatic vitality only by fits and starts. If we take a bit and study it, we can recognise that even in the duller-looking speeches the poet's imagination has not been asleep, but has been kept alive by a certain warmth and intensity of feeling. But the intellectual effort of understanding the situation in scene after scene of the intricate drama is too exhausting for consecutive perusal. A sympathetic society of Maryans might read it in the course of a winter with sustained interest, but few individuals have persevered to the end. As for representation on the stage, that was probably never intended by the author.

There have been rumours from time to time for nearly twenty years now that Mr. Swinburne meant to make an acting play out of the story of Mary Stuart. There is abundance of material for several acting plays in the trilogy, but probably not a little recasting would be required. Hitherto, it would seem, Mr. Swinburne has found it impossible to satisfy either himself or the acting manager, or both together. Will he ever give us an actable play? Will he ever try? Will he succeed if he does? Perhaps it is sufficient for answer to point to the length of time that has elapsed since the questions were first asked. For stage purposes "Marino Faliero," noble poem though it is, is not more hopeful than "Atalanta," and less so than "Chastelard."

THE NOBLE SCION.

A RECENT trial, to which no further reference need be made, has shown us something of the habits of a certain class of whose existence probably many worthy persons were entirely unaware. Tom and Jerry we now know are still amongst us—Tom